

Aide-de-Camp's Library



सत्यमेव जयते

Rashtrapati Bhavan
New Delhi

Accn. No. 1592

Call No. IX (1) - 1

•

REMINISCENCES OF LORD KILBRACKEN

•



MACMILLAN AND CO., LIMITED
LONDON • BOMBAY • CALCUTTA • MADRAS
MELBOURNE

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY
NEW YORK • BOSTON • CHICAGO
DALLAS • ATLANTA • SAN FRANCISCO

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY
OF CANADA, LIMITED
TORONTO

REMINISCENCES
OF
LORD KILBRACKEN
G.C.B.

HON. FELLOW OF BALLIOL COLLEGE
AND OF HERTFORD COLLEGE, OXFORD

Chè suole a riguardar giovare altrui.

MACMILLAN AND CO., LIMITED
ST. MARTIN'S STREET, LONDON

1931

•

COPYRIGHT

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN

NOTE

This book was written and privately printed in 1916-17, without any idea of publication. It was written as a narrative of some parts of my own life, and the descriptions of persons with whom I had come in contact were a necessary part of that narrative. But there was also a good deal about myself and my private life which I was, and still am, very unwilling to obtrude upon the public; when, therefore, my friends urged me to publish, as friends generally do, I did nothing. Now, however, when the lapse of fourteen years has removed some of the obstacles that existed in 1916, I have accepted the conclusion that the pages relating to Mr. Gladstone and other personages with whom I had to do during my official life ought to be published, and that, if that is to be done, I had better see them through the press myself. But I cannot change the form of the book; a narrative it was, and a narrative it must remain. As a well-known author has very truly said, "It is easy, and even helpful, to skip."

K.

Dec. 1930.

*Saper d'alcuno è buono,
Degli altri fia laudabile tacerci.*

REMINISCENCES OF LORD KILBRACKEN

CHAPTER I

Nearly twenty years ago (I write in 1916)¹ an intimate friend of mine, being then in his sixty-ninth year but apparently in perfect general health, was informed by a surgeon whom he consulted that he had only a few months to live, a forecast which proved to be quite correct. Within a day or two after receiving this warning he began to write, for the benefit of his family but especially of his descendants, a short account of his own life and experiences, which has since his death been privately printed and covers about a hundred octavo pages. I have often thought that his example should be followed, with variations according to character and circumstances, even by persons who have little or nothing to tell that can interest anyone beyond their own family circle. Accordingly, having now attained the age which he had then reached, but not having as yet received a definite notice to quit, I at last begin a task which I have long been intending to undertake "some day or another." That my life has been an uninteresting one I do not pretend to think; unfortunately one finds, when it

¹ The text of this book stands, with few exceptions, as it was written in 1916, and all time-references should be understood accordingly.

REMINISCENCES

comes to writing about it, that the most interesting parts of it have to be left out.

I believe my memory to be still a fairly accurate one, and in what I am going to write I shall rely upon it, without as a rule troubling myself to refer to letters or other documents. My reminiscences will be reminiscences, and must be judged as such. I may make mistakes as to details, but as to essentials I am sure I shall not go far wrong.

I was born on June 17, 1847, in No. 46 (then numbered 39) Portman Square, the house of my grandfather, Mr. Wynne. I was the eldest child and the only son of my parents. My father, John Robert Godley, was the eldest son of John Godley of Killegar,¹ in the county of Leitrim; he had been called to the English Bar, but had never taken his profession seriously, though I believe he had held a few briefs. His bent was rather towards politics, local government duties, and social problems, and he wrote a good deal in those early days for certain newspapers, more especially the *Spectator*, then a weekly Liberal paper, and the *Morning Chronicle*, the organ of the Peelites. By the consent of all who knew him he was a man of first-rate abilities, who, if he had had good health and a longer life, would undoubtedly have risen to a high position in the political world. He was an excellent public speaker, and was tremendously in earnest about all the great questions of the day. He had been at Harrow, where he was captain of the Eleven, I think in 1832; but he never played against Eton. Between 1828 and 1832 there were no matches, and in the

¹ Pronounced "Killy-gär."

LORD KILBRACKEN

latter year he, being an Irish boy, left for home earlier than the rest of the school; in those days there was no question of keeping such boys back in order to play in the match. About the year 1885 I met at dinner Lord Bessborough, who with R. Grimston was for so many years the mainstay of Harrow cricket; and he then told me that it was my father who gave him his place in the Harrow Eleven, and described to me the dialogue which had taken place on that occasion, every word of which he evidently remembered. My father, having won the Sayer Scholarship at Harrow, proceeded thence as a commoner to Christ Church, Oxford; during his stay there he devoted more time (so he told me by way of warning) to social joys, and especially to riding, than to reading, with the result that he just missed his first class. His coach was Roundell Palmer, afterwards Lord Chancellor, but then a resident Don, with whom he was ever thenceforward on terms of intimate friendship.¹ But if he did not greatly distinguish himself in the Schools, he made an unusually large number of friends, chiefly of course Christ Church men, who were much attached to him and played an important part in his later life. After taking his degree he travelled a good deal, visiting among other countries some parts of Scandinavia, then almost unknown to Englishmen, and the United States and Canada, on which he wrote a book that was highly praised and had a considerable sale at the time. He married in 1846 Charlotte Wynne, daughter of C. W. G. Wynne of Voelas, Denbigh-

¹ See Lord Selborne's *Memorials*, Vol. I. pp. 162, 347-8, 352, 353-4, 450.

REMINISCENCES

shire, and sister of Charles Wynne, one of his Christ Church friends, and in the following year he stood for Leitrim at the General Election, but without success. The Irish famine of the previous year had turned his attention to questions of emigration and colonization, the result of which was that he and others elaborated a scheme for the foundation of what was known as the Canterbury Settlement in New Zealand. Being at the time in weak health and under orders to take a long sea voyage, he went out in 1849 to New Zealand as the representative of the Canterbury Association. The work that he did there in the years 1850-1852 may be found set forth in various books (I may mention especially Anthony Trollope's *Travels in Australasia*), and his statue by Woolner stands in the Cathedral Square of Christchurch, New Zealand, with an inscription describing him as the founder of the colony. On his return to England he for reasons both of health and of expense gave up for a time the idea of going into Parliament, and was appointed in 1854 Assistant Under-Secretary of State at the War Office. He held this post till his death in 1861. It was remarked that the Secretary of State (Lord Herbert of Lea), the Under-Secretary (Sir Benjamin Hawes), and the Assistant Under-Secretary (my father) all died within two or three months of each other, and there can now be little doubt that a contributory cause, if not the chief cause, in each case was the awful sanitary condition of the War Office, which was not discovered till some fifteen years later.

When Mr. Gladstone was forming his first Government in 1868, I was an undergraduate at

LORD KILBRACKEN

Oxford ; my tutor, Jowett, used to ask me once a week to a *tête-à-tête* breakfast, and I was sitting with him on one of these occasions when he suddenly said to me : "If your father had been alive now, he would have been a member of this Cabinet." Nothing could have surprised me more at the time, more especially as Jowett had hardly ever mentioned him to me before : but now, looking back, I think that, if his health had improved, and if by the death of my grandfather in 1863 he had inherited (as no doubt he would have done) an income sufficient for his needs, he would probably have gone into Parliament, for he had many friends both able and willing to give him effective help ; and, once in Parliament, he might well have had high office. Mr. Gladstone, who was his senior at Christ Church but became a friend after he had left Oxford, had the highest opinion of his abilities, and used often to speak of him both to me and to others in terms of enthusiastic admiration.

My father started for New Zealand at the end of 1849, when I was two and a half years old, in the sailing-ship *Lady Nugent*, taking with him my mother, myself, and two servants. The voyage occupied 103 days, and my mother was the only lady-passenger. We touched first at Otago, then at Wellington, where we spent a few weeks, and finally went to our destination, Port Lyttelton, where we lived for more than two years. This period, though an important one in the lives of my parents, was to me merely an agreeable and healthful time, of which I carried away very pleasant recollections. We had a fairly comfortable, though small, house ; the town consisted mainly of

REMINISCENCES

wooden huts, and the life which we led was one which must have seemed decidedly simple, not to say rough, to my father and mother, though to me it was enjoyable enough. The wide open spaces, the outdoor life, and the absence of many petty restraints to which children are subject in more civilized countries, made it for me a happy time, to which I looked back with regret for many years after my return to England. I have still a distinct recollection of many scenes and incidents during our stay, though I was not much more than five years old when, my father's work being accomplished, we left New Zealand. I will mention a few of them.

My father used occasionally to move his establishment from Lyttelton to what were called "The Plains," at Riccarton, on the River Avon, near Christchurch; here we lived in a small wooden hut, which was just large enough to hold my father, my mother, and myself; our servants slept in tents close by, and all our cooking was done at a camp fire in the open air. On one of these occasions, during the day-time, our hut caught fire and was completely consumed; I have a clear vision of my mother trying in vain, at an early stage of the fire, to extinguish it by pouring water on it from a kettle. I remember the landscape perfectly; the immense level plain, with here and there patches of the primeval forest, and in the distance the range of snowy mountains, the High Alps of New Zealand.

One such patch of wood was close to our hut, and here I used sometimes to be allowed to go with a friendly Maori and sit in a rude shelter of long grass and boughs of trees, above which was a horizontal pole, so placed as to form a convenient

perch: the Maori used to attract certain kinds of birds by imitating their notes, and, when they lit on the perch, knocked them down with a long stick. Maoris were then plentiful in that part of New Zealand; for the most part they had not adopted European dress, and the men wore nothing but a large cloak of matting. Thus clad they used, old and young alike, to amuse themselves in the streets of Lyttelton by whipping tops, a sport which I suppose was new to them, and of which they seemed never to tire. On one occasion, in the course of a long journey, my nurse (Powles) and I, being for some reason separated from my parents, stayed a night in the house of a celebrated old Maori chief, who had lately adopted European manners and customs, but was well known to have been a great warrior, and of course a cannibal, in his youth. My mother in after years told me that my father was thought to have been rather rash in accepting this invitation for me: but the old man was, as I remember, most kind and hospitable, and showed no symptom of a return to his former habits. I have a very vivid recollection of interminably long journeys which I performed on horseback, seated in front of Powles or of a man named Holland, who was my father's groom and horse-keeper; carriages and roads were alike unknown in the colony, so far as I remember. The great excitement on these occasions was the crossing of brooks and rivers, which were numerous, and had to be forded or swum according to circumstances. There were large numbers of wild pigs on the plains, and I can still see my father on his horse, with a long spear resting in a socket beside his

REMINISCENCES

stirrup and rising perpendicularly above his head, as he used to return after a day's pig-sticking. I can dimly recall the excitement caused by the arrival of the first important batch of settlers in the *Charlotte Jane*, the *Randolph*, and the *Sir George Seymour*—there were two or three more ships, but their names have escaped me—an event which I believe is now regarded in the colony much as the landing of the Pilgrim Fathers is regarded in the United States. On the other hand, I remember very distinctly being present when my father laid the first stone of the Cathedral at Christchurch; the process of stone-laying interested me keenly, but my father's speech, which followed, bored me almost to tears. The only other reminiscence which I shall record, a very trivial one, is that we kept for some time a tame "*kiwi*" (pronounced "kee-wee") or apteryx,¹ which lived in a barrel and was fed with little bits of raw meat. When it died, its skin was preserved and stuffed, and it now forms part of the collection of New Zealand birds which after my mother's death we presented, in accordance with what would doubtless have been my father's wish, to the museum of Harrow School.

From New Zealand we sailed for Australia in a ship called the *Hashemy*, which was fitted for the conveyance of convicts from England to that country, but of course had none on board on this occasion, the practice of transportation having been by this time discontinued. My father wished to see something of New South Wales, and especially of the gold-diggings, then very active; so my mother

¹ The wingless bird of New Zealand, now, I believe, nearly extinct,

LORD KILBRACKEN

and I spent about six weeks in Sydney while he, under the auspices of the Governor, to whom he had introductions, made long expeditions into the interior on horseback, returning from the diggings in company with a consignment of gold, escorted by a strong force of police. On the 27th January, 1853, he wrote home from Sydney: "We have taken cabins in the *Anglesey* [a sailing-ship of about 1,200 tons], having been dissuaded by everybody from going in one of the steamers, which are utter failures, as regards both regularity and speed." Accordingly we sailed early in March, and after another voyage of 103 days—that having been the exact length of our voyage from England to New Zealand—we landed at Blackwall, June 16, 1853, having sighted no land between Sydney Heads and the Lizard. We came round Cape Horn, where I remember seeing several very large icebergs; and, as we had gone to New Zealand round the Cape of Good Hope, I can claim to have sailed round the world. By this time I was old enough to be thoroughly interested in the incidents of the voyage; I made friends with the sailors, and used to climb about the rigging as high as the cross-trees, that being the limit laid down for me by my father. How he could allow so much as that I am now unable to understand. I thus received impressions which, coming on the top of my life in New Zealand, where I was in constant contact with the sea and ships, gave me an interest in nautical matters which has never left me.

At this point I must say something of the two servants who accompanied us to New Zealand. One of them, William Stormont, had been footman

REMINISCENCES

to my grandfather, Mr. Wynne: he was a good servant, though unfortunately not a total abstainer: I was warmly attached to him, and shed bitter tears when he left us and remained behind in Australia, where, as we afterwards heard, he got high wages and soon drank himself to death. The other, Mary Powles, was a person who played a very important part in my life and in the lives of my mother and sisters. She had been a lady's maid, and in that capacity had had various interesting experiences, among them that of serving as second in command the celebrated Duchess of St. Albans, formerly Harriet Mellon, the actress. She came as lady's maid to my mother, but accompanied her to New Zealand as a sort of factotum, her principal duty being that of acting as my nurse. She was also an excellent cook, and indeed there were few domestic duties to which she could not turn her hand with complete success. To her I personally owe a much greater debt than that which men commonly owe to their nurses, however efficient and devoted. She played a not unimportant part in my education, and I do not exaggerate when I say that she was one of the cleverest and most sensible women whom I have ever met, and that it was a real advantage to myself and my sisters to have spent our early years in close contact with her. To this day, her sayings and words of advice about everyday matters often recur to my mind, and I seldom recall them without wondering at the wisdom and insight which they show to have been possessed by an almost uneducated woman. When we came to England she remained with us as head-nurse, lady's maid, and housekeeper, until

LORD KILBRACKEN

the youngest of us passed out of her hands ; she then, as housekeeper, ruled my mother's establishment, to the advantage of all concerned, until she died in 1883. She had by that time been in my mother's service for thirty-seven years, and had long been regarded as a member of the family, with whom we were on perfectly equal terms, though we were generally conscious that, if it came to a conflict of wills, it was not Powles who would have to give way.

Before leaving for New Zealand my father had taken a long lease of No. 69, Gloucester Place, near Portman Square ; to this house we returned soon after our arrival in England, but at first we stayed in my grandfather's, Mr. Wynne's, house in Portman Square. I have a very distinct recollection of the landing at Blackwall, the journey by train to Fenchurch Street (a new experience, for there were then no railways in New Zealand, and I could not remember previous journeys in England), and then the drive through the streets of London, which seemed interminable and filled me with astonishment. When we reached Portman Square the family party was at dinner ; there was naturally a good deal of excitement and exchange of greetings among the adults ; and, when the tumult began to subside, someone remembered my existence and enquired for me, but I was nowhere to be seen. I was repeatedly called by name, but there was no reply. After an anxious interval, however, I was discovered under the dining-room table ; being by nature a rather shy and reticent child I had taken refuge there from a scene of demonstrative affection in which I was determined not to take part if I could help it.

REMINISCENCES

My father soon after his return was appointed to the Assistant Under-Secretaryship of State at the War Office, an important post at that time, as the Crimean War was just beginning. He was an excellent public servant, and his official memoranda and other writings were, to my knowledge, remembered and occasionally quoted at the War Office forty or fifty years after his death. If his life had been prolonged he would undoubtedly have succeeded to the Under-Secretaryship of State when Sir Benjamin Hawes died in 1861; but, as I have already said, if he had survived his father he would almost certainly have gone into Parliament and devoted himself to politics. He was, like Mr. Gladstone, a Peelite, and, according to the standard of that day, a High Churchman.

For these seven years, 1854 to 1861, our home was in Gloucester Place; but in 1859 we moved into a larger and better house in the same street, No. 11, which was my mother's home till her death in 1907. My father, as I have said, was a man of many friends, and the names, described as those of "a few of his most intimate friends," which appear on the tablet placed by them to his memory in Harrow School Chapel are as follows: C. B. Adderley (afterwards Lord Norton), T. Somers Cocks (M.P.), Lord Devon, J. E. FitzGerald (Prime Minister of New Zealand), W. E. Gladstone, Lord de Grey (Lord Ripon), Sir Walter James (Lord Northbourne), Lord Lyttelton, Lord Monck, W. Monsell (Lord Emly), the Duke of Newcastle, Roundell Palmer (Lord Selborne), Sir Hungerford Pollen, Sir John Simeon (M.P.), Sir E. Thornton (Ambassador), C. G. Wynne (M.P.),

LORD KILBRACKEN

G. A. Hamilton (Secretary to the Treasury), W. P. Prendergast, Arthur Mills (M.P.), H. S. Selfe (Police Magistrate), F. A. MacGeachy (M.P.), and the Hon. Edward Twisleton. I shall mention, in addition to those in this list, only two others, W. M. Thackeray and Alfred Tennyson. I well remember his talking to me about the former, and showing me a letter in his very peculiar handwriting; while the present Lord Tennyson records in his *Life* of his father how deeply the latter was grieved "by the deaths of his two friends, Clough and Godley," which occurred, both about the same time, at the end of 1861.

My father and mother in London saw a good deal of the society that best suited them; my recollection is that they did not often dine at home, and when they did so were seldom alone. I mention this by way of contrast to the manner of life adopted by my mother after my father's death. Being tied to his office, my father used every autumn to take a furnished house within easy reach of London, and I can thus remember enjoying a country life in places such as Streatham, Hanwell, and Cricklewood, which now form parts of Greater London. Besides this, we used to pay long visits, of many weeks' or months' duration, to my two grandfathers in Ireland and North Wales respectively. To these, and especially to my visits to Wales, I look back with the greatest pleasure. Both houses, Killegar and Voelas, were perfect paradises for children, both surrounded by woods and water, both beautiful (though at Killegar the beauty did not extend much beyond the "demesne"), and both affording excellent shooting and fishing, as soon as one was old enough to profit by them.

REMINISCENCES

The society at Killegar consisted of my grandfather and grandmother, who were by this time very old, and of one of their younger sons, who was permanently domiciled with them and acted as a sort of agent and general manager. Besides these, my other uncles, James, Denis, and William, were often there, and my Aunt Harriet was married to a younger brother of Lord Inchiquin, Henry O'Brien, who was the incumbent of Killegar. My grandfather was in 1853 a short, rather thickset man of about eighty, who wore old-fashioned black clothes and had become very deaf. He was decidedly clever, and in ordinary intercourse friendly, good-humoured, and amusing; but he was a complete autocrat, and it was easy to see that his sons, with the exception of my father, were more or less afraid of him, though they were nevertheless fond of him, and certainly respected him. I seem even now to see his short, sturdy form, with white hair brushed up into a kind of *toupet*, entering the breakfast-room; two or three of his sons, tall, big men, receive him with a respectful "Good-morning, father," while he, without looking at them, replies carelessly over his shoulder, "Good-morning t'ye," and marches to the window to examine the weather. There is a characteristic story of his visiting one of his sons at Sandhurst; as they walked about he thought he perceived that the young man was not quite sure that his father's dress was fully up to the Sandhurst standard, and without any question or explanation remarked suddenly, "You can tell them I'm the butler." Of us, his grandchildren, he took little notice, though he was kind to us in a jocose, semi-contemptuous fashion. His

LORD KILBRACKEN

children had been brought up with an austerity which was unusual even in that comparatively austere age; and a portion of their pocket-money, as they themselves have told me, went in supplying themselves with what are now considered to be virtually necessities of life for young children. And the following story of him will seem strange to twentieth-century parents. While my father was at Harrow, it happened that a boy in the same boarding-house died suddenly, and in some way which made his death a severe shock to the other boys. It was very near the end of the term, and the Head Master and the Boarding House Master decided between them that all the boys in that house should be sent home. My father accordingly arrived at Killegar, after a journey which in those pre-railway days was a formidable one, about a week before he was expected, no doubt much pleased at the prospect of a slight addition to his holidays. But my grandfather was extremely angry. He considered that the reasons given for this unusual step were quite insufficient, and he then and there, by way of showing his indignation, sent my father back to Harrow to finish the term. I should have thought this story incredible if it had not been told to me by my father, and confirmed subsequently by my uncles. My personal recollections of my grandfather are few: but I very distinctly remember his strong dislike of dogs, whom he declared to be "certainly dirty and probably mad"; and his daily game of backgammon with my grandmother in the drawing-room after dinner. I can see them sitting in front of a big fire, a mixture of turf and coal, and can hear the rattle of the dice

REMINISCENCES

and the old-fashioned words announcing the numbers—deuce, tray, cater, and so on. Each of them invariably cheated, so far as it was possible to do so without certain detection, and vehement accusations and disputes were frequent.

My grandmother was a dignified old lady, who had evidently been very handsome; she was a thorough-bred Irishwoman, being the daughter of Denis Daly of Dunsandle, in co. Galway, a Privy Councillor and an important political personage in Ireland in the days before the Union. Her eldest brother, James, was created Lord Dunsandle, and a younger brother, Robert, was Bishop of Cashel and a well-known character in the Irish Church, of whom it was said that the Irish Bench of Bishops were the most contented set of men in the world, as they had only one Bob Daly, and thought that more than enough. My grandmother was undeniably a rather narrow-minded woman, by no means as clever as her husband, and many were the jokes about her well-known prejudices which her sons used to enjoy at her expense, but always good-humouredly and without malice on either side. Her interests were confined to housekeeping, playing the part of an Irish Lady Bountiful (which differs considerably from that of her English namesake), and promoting that form of the Christian religion which reaches its full development in the Province of Ulster. Her feelings towards Roman Catholics may be gathered from the fact that, if she had to mention a “chapel” of that denomination (she would have died rather than call it a “church”) she lowered her voice to a whisper, as though pronouncing some word too shocking for ears polite.

LORD KILBRACKEN

Of my uncles, my father's brothers, the eldest, James, was incumbent of Carigallen, not far from Killegar; he lived on till 1910, much beloved by all who knew him. His eldest son, Alfred, is now (1916) Public Orator of the University of Oxford, and well known as a scholar and a writer. My uncles Denis and William were both soldiers. Denis went to Sandhurst at an early age, and, during his course there, gave an instance of his remarkable sense of humour by paying a visit to his elder brother, James, who was still at school at Winchester, and tipping him. While still young he married, left the army, and for some years ran a large farm in the West of Ireland. He was a very able man, with great social gifts, and had numerous friends; among them my father's friend Lord Monck, who, when in 1861 he became Governor-General of Canada, took my Uncle Denis with him as his Private Secretary. After an unusually long term of office in that capacity, at a very important epoch in Canadian history, my uncle returned with his chief to this country, and was soon afterwards appointed to the Secretaryship, first, of the Irish Church Commission, and then to that of the Land Commission which succeeded it; at that time a very difficult and responsible office, the duties of which he discharged with much success, and was made a Companion of the Bath on his retirement. When the House of Lords in 1880 appointed a Committee to enquire into the working of the Irish Land Act, my Uncle Denis was naturally one of the first and most important witnesses, and I happened to be at that time Private Secretary to Mr. Gladstone, who nine years earlier had been the

REMINISCENCES

author of the Act, and was detested accordingly by a majority of the Committee. The first question put to my uncle, evidently with the intention of suggesting that he was not an unbiassed witness, was: "I believe you are uncle to Mr. Gladstone's Private Secretary?" "No," replied my uncle ("I wasn't going to stand that," he said, in telling me the story), "I am not his uncle: he is my nephew." There was a general laugh; the hostile peers were disarmed, and the examination proceeded on a more friendly basis.

My Uncle William served in the 56th Regiment (the "Pompadours") until he had become a Lieutenant-Colonel; he then retired upon some military appointment, and died comparatively young. His eldest son, Sir Alexander Godley, K.C.B.,¹ is now, as a Commander of an Army Corps, taking an active and distinguished part in the Great War.

Of my father's two sisters, one, Mrs. O'Brien, has already been mentioned. The other, Charlotte, married Mr., afterwards Sir Hungerford Pollen, a Christ Church friend of my father's, and died when I was about thirteen. I remember her as one of the most charming and attractive people that I have ever known.

So much as to my Killegar relations. I must now say something about my mother's family, of whom both as a boy and afterwards I saw far more, and whose direct influence on me was much greater.

My grandfather, Mr. Wynne, was a tall, thin, stately old gentleman with courtly manners; he had lived in the world of his day, and had been for some time Member for Carnarvonshire, but was

¹ Now (1930), G.C.B. and Governor of Gibraltar.

LORD KILBRACKEN

nevertheless extremely shy, reserved, and unemonstrative: extraordinarily affectionate and kind-hearted, and full of interest in many subjects, though he generally spoke little, and silence never seemed to bore him. He was a very good amateur painter in water-colour, chiefly of sea-subjects, having been in his youth an ardent yachtsman; he also played the violoncello well, but nearly always in the solitude of his own room. Up to the age of thirteen or fourteen, though I recognized his extreme kindness and friendliness, I was rather afraid of him, and never had any conversation with him. But when I got beyond that age, to my astonishment I sometimes found myself talking to him at my ease as a man and a brother, and greatly enjoying it. As time went on this happened more frequently, and if he had lived a few years more we should have become great friends, but he died when I was sixteen. I think of him with most sincere affection and gratitude.

My grandmother, his wife, who was a Yorkshire woman (she had been Miss Hildyard, of Stokesley), I remember merely as a very kind, sensible, and pleasant old lady; she died several years before he did. Their eldest son, my Uncle Charles, who after his father's death took the name of Wynne Finch, was most kind to me, both during my father's lifetime and afterwards, and his sons, Charles, Heneage, and Seymour, were all three among my most intimate relations as long as they lived. My mother's other brothers were Heneage, a Major in the 68th Durham Light Infantry, who was killed at Inkerman; John, a Fellow of All Souls and a clergyman, who became a Roman Catholic and a

REMINISCENCES

Jesuit priest; and William, who was for a year or two a clerk in the Treasury, then went into the Coldstream Guards, and died young. John was in his youth a noted athlete and sportsman; played cricket twice for Oxford against Cambridge in 1839-40, was a first-class shot and a most skilful fisherman. I have seen him, when over sixty, in the clerical garb and top-hat worn by the Jesuit priests of those days, wading knee-deep in the Conway and throwing a salmon-fly with the hand and eye of a master.

Of my mother's sisters, who all three played important parts in my life, I shall say something later on. At present I will only add that Voelas, as it remained till my grandfather's death in 1864, was the most delightful place for a boy, both indoors and out of doors, that I can imagine, and I can never be grateful enough to those who made it what it was to me.

It was in these places, and subject to these influences, that I lived until I went to school in 1857. I do not think that during the first ten years of my life—that is, until I went to Radley—I ever had a lesson of any kind from anyone except my father and mother. My father taught me history, geography, and French, and, when the time for school drew near, a little Latin and Greek; my mother taught me everything else. I cannot remember a time when I was unable to read for my own pleasure, and my lessons, then as afterwards, came easily to me, both my parents being in their different ways excellent teachers. From a French-speaking Swiss nursery-maid and from my father's lessons I learnt enough of the language to give me from

LORD KILBRACKEN

the first a great advantage over nearly all my schoolfellows; I could already read French books for my amusement, and the start which I thus obtained was of the greatest use to me both at school and elsewhere. I was exceedingly fond of reading, but had no precocious love for adult literature; Mayne Reid, Marryat, and Miss Yonge were my favourite authors. Scott's novels I did not begin till I had gone to school; but I knew pretty nearly the whole of his *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, the *Lady of the Lake*, and *Marmion* by heart, as well as a good deal of the works of other standard poets. Thus equipped, at the age of nine years and ten months, I was sent to Radley at the beginning of the summer term, 1857.

My father was quite determined that I should go to Harrow at the age of thirteen or fourteen, and had long since entered my name for Dr. Vaughan's house. His choice of Radley as a preparatory school was a curious one, and, I am obliged to think, not a very wise one, though it turned out fairly well. Having himself suffered much at a private preparatory school he had a strong prejudice against such schools as a class, and Radley seemed to offer a possible alternative. It had been founded about ten years before I went there by the Rev. William Sewell, a High Churchman, who had enjoyed a reputation beyond his deserts as a tutor at Oxford, and this predisposed my father in favour of the school of which he had become Head Master. He had his good qualities, and an unusual gift of the gab, but unfortunately there was a strong tinge of humbug about him. In business matters he was hopeless; with the help of a brother who acted

REMINISCENCES

as bursar, he brought the school into a state of imminent bankruptcy, and, a short time before I was removed from it, had to depart hurriedly in the middle of a term, leaving it in debt to the extent of, I believe, £28,000. But he was very plausible and skilled in the art of window-dressing, by which means, and with the start which his Oxford reputation gave him, especially in the eyes of High Churchmen (among whom my father was to be reckoned), he attracted a fairly numerous *clientèle*. The school possessed very great advantages in its situation, four miles from Oxford and close to a very pretty part of the Thames. To a parent who went down to inspect it it was an attractive place; and so it came about that I, aged nine, was sent to a school of 150 boys, among whom were some of eighteen or nineteen, just going to the University, and others of all ages down to eight or nine, for I was not the youngest boy in the school. I was, however, placed at the bottom of the lowest form, and my name ended the roll-call for the whole of my first term.

We had a great deal of chapel; full choral matins and evensong daily, and on Sundays and Holy Days a good deal more besides: we had also a daily Divinity lesson. The general management of the school was austere; we got up at six, and, after an hour and a half of lessons, had breakfast at eight on tea and bread-and-butter: the same for tea; for dinner, meat and pudding, but the meat was at times bad and ill-cooked, and I was often unable to touch it. My mother used to send me frequent hampers, which helped to keep me in good health; I must, however, confess that, whether it was my

fault or my misfortune, I was often unable to swallow food which the other boys seemed to dispose of without much difficulty. I was afterwards told, I suspect truly, that the school was just then so much in debt to its tradesmen, including the butcher, that no complaints were possible. As for the teaching, it was on the whole, so far as I can now judge, not very good; but two or three of the masters through whose hands I passed were excellent: I must mention R. W. Norman, afterwards Warden (as the Head Master was called), William Barber, who went to the Bar and became a very successful Chancery Counsel and Q.C., and R. F. Clarke, a Fellow of St. John's, who had rowed in the Oxford Eight, and subsequently became a Roman Catholic. W. W. Jackson, of Balliol, afterwards Fellow, Tutor, and for many years Rector of Exeter, held a mastership there for a short time just before I left; I had no teaching from him, but this was the beginning of what has been one of my longest, most intimate, and most valued friendships.

Having so far dwelt rather on the weak points of Radley as it existed in those distant days, I hasten to add that I was on the whole very happy there, thoroughly enjoyed the cricket, boating, and bathing (I did *not* enjoy the form of football which then was practised there), and learned many things which made a lasting impression on me for good. Among these influences of the place I will mention the two which were for me the most important. First, no doubt we had too much chapel, but the great familiarity which I then acquired with the services and observances of the Church, and with

REMINISCENCES

its music and ritual (I was myself for two years in the choir as a soprano), produced certain deep impressions on my mind, which have lasted to this day. Second, although I was, as I have said, singularly fortunate in two at least of the places in which I used to spend my holidays, I believe that the surroundings of Radley—the fine old Georgian house which formed the nucleus of the school buildings; the spacious park, with its grand trees, its lake, its flights of rooks, starlings, and other birds; the occasional visits to Oxford; and, above all, the river, and the long summer evenings spent in boating and bathing—I believe that these experiences did much to give me that love of out-of-door nature which has been one of the strongest feelings of my life. To be sure, at the time I hardly knew the meaning of these things, and, if I had been asked whether I cared for them, should probably have replied in the negative. Nevertheless, the effect was produced, and I shall never cease to be grateful for the influences that produced it.

It was at Radley, and at the age of twelve or thirteen, that I began to keep a diary. I went on with it for about a month; it was of the full and descriptive kind, and, judging by what I remember of it, I think it must have been a rather creditable performance. Then, owing to some interruption, I discontinued it for a week or two, and when I took it up again and read it over I was seized by a feeling of reaction and disgust; it seemed to me that I had made an exhibition of myself and had violated the rules of reticence and reserve which I held sacred. I immediately destroyed it, and since

LORD KILBRACKEN

then, so far as I remember, have never attempted to keep a diary of any kind.

The boys, as I recall them, were distinctly a mixture of widely different elements; a fair proportion of them were as good a lot as could be found at any public school; at the other end of the scale was a baddish set, worse certainly than any that I was ever aware of at Rugby. I have been told that some of them had been accepted on easy terms in order to keep the school full. There was some bullying, not much; but the mixture in one school of boys of all ages from nine to nineteen was certainly objectionable, and the practice has long ago been abandoned. Since I left, Radley has grown, changed, developed, and improved, and I know that it has long been, and is now, an excellent public school on a small scale.

Of my contemporaries I shall mention only two, both a little older than I was; my cousin, Seymour Wynne Finch, and Walter James, who afterwards became my brother-in-law and is now Lord Northbourne. They both remained at Radley after I left, and went thence, Walter to Christ Church, and Seymour into the 60th Rifles (K.R.R.), from which he subsequently exchanged into the Blues. He lived until about ten years ago, and I must here say a few words about him, as throughout my boyhood and early manhood he and I were on very intimate terms; and he, being, as I have said, rather older than I was, and exceedingly clever into the bargain, had no doubt a good deal of influence on me. For mere cleverness, indeed, and quickness of intellect, I have known few who equalled him; but he hated his lessons, and never did a stroke of work if he

REMINISCENCES

could help it. On the other hand, he took an intelligent interest in very many subjects, read a good deal in a desultory way, and possessed some knowledge, not perhaps very profound, of many matters which would have been thought to be beyond his ken. Even in examinations, as a boy, he could do very well if he tried; for instance, in the competition for Sandhurst, having till within the last few weeks been perfectly idle, he went for a short time to a crammer, worked hard, and came out very near the top of the list. He was singularly good-looking, and, like his eldest brother, who was Captain of the Boats at Eton, had in him the making of a first-rate oarsman. His social gifts were remarkable; he not only had a keen sense of humour, but was really witty, and his sayings were often remembered and quoted in the society in which he lived. He was very popular and had hosts of friends. When he was about forty, having come late into the regiment, he was superannuated and obliged to retire from the army with the rank of Major. Thenceforward he lived a comfortable life as a bachelor, becoming a Director of one or two Companies, and finding in them and in his numerous friendships enough to occupy his time. He and I, although our paths in life after early years did not often meet, had always a very real affection for each other; I know I may speak for him as well as myself, and I believe we both equally looked forward to coming together again and seeing more of each other in our later years, a hope which, owing to his death, was not destined to be fulfilled.

At the end of my first term at Radley, when I was barely ten years old, my journey-money was

LORD KILBRACKEN

put into my hand, and I was sent in to Oxford Station in company with a good many other boys. When I got there, never having travelled alone before, I had no notion how to proceed and stood helplessly on the platform, watching the trains go by. One of the bigger boys, perceiving how matters stood, had compassion on me, asked me whither I was going, took my ticket for me, looked after my luggage, saw me safe into a compartment of the right train, and finally, as though to complete the likeness to the story of the Good Samaritan, took out three pence, and bought me a copy of *Punch* to amuse me on the journey. His name was J. X. Merriman, and he is now a Privy Councillor, full of years and honours, having long been one of the most conspicuous figures in South African politics. I have never seen him since he left Radley, and I am afraid he does not know how often, in the course of the last fifty-nine years, I have thought of him with gratitude.¹

I have said that I was placed at the bottom of the school, but I went up quickly; and although I had had, through temporary ill-health, to spend two whole terms at home, I was already in the Fifth Form, and likely to be head of it at the end of the term, when I was just over fourteen, that is to say in the autumn of 1861. As the only Form above me was the Sixth, which contained not more than

¹ Lady Frederick Cavendish, having read this book when privately printed, communicated the substance of this paragraph to Mr. Merriman, who was a friend of hers. He replied that he had read it with much pleasure, "and," he added, "it surprises me to find that at any period of my life I was looked upon as a good-natured fellow." (1930.)

REMINISCENCES

five or six boys, there were, as my father remarked in a letter written at that time, not many rungs left between me and the top of the Radley ladder. But before this he had decided to remove me from the school.

I must here explain how it was that he did not fulfil his fixed intention of sending me to Harrow; for he was a most patriotic Harrovian.

When I had been at Radley for two or three years I was getting on well in the school, was very happy, and received excellent reports from the masters, who strongly urged him to let me finish my schooling where I was. In spite of the drawbacks which I have mentioned, and of which he was not fully aware, he was on the whole well satisfied so far with the school and with my position in it; and, in short, he was persuaded into the decision to leave me at Radley till I should go to Oxford, a decision which he was destined soon to repent. Accordingly he removed my name from Dr. Vaughan's list. This happened when I was eleven or twelve years old, but by the time I was fourteen I was, as I have said, very near to the top of the school, and he began to be convinced that the standard of attainment at Radley was not a high one, and that it would be well to give me a longer hill to climb elsewhere. The high place which I took in an examination held in the summer of 1861 decided him. He determined to remove me from Radley at Christmas, and at once attempted to get me at short notice into Harrow. But by this time the lists were full, and the only two houses that had vacancies were, as he ascertained, generally thought to be bad ones. Thereupon, having a

LORD KILBRACKEN

strong opinion against Eton, which I am afraid was partly the result of Harrovian prejudice, he immediately turned his thoughts to Rugby. He had been a great admirer of Dr. Arnold, and was hardly less an admirer of Dr. Temple, the reigning Head Master. His great friend, Mr. Adderley, was one of the Governors of the school; and another intimate friend, Mr. Selfe, a London Police Magistrate, had two boys there and gave him an excellent account of it. On the 25th September he wrote to Mr. Adderley begging him to use his influence to get me a place in a good house at Rugby. As it happened, an unexpected vacancy had occurred in Mr. Jex-Blake's house, one of the best in the school, and in a few days all was settled.

I received the news of my father's intention with grief and dismay, and wrote him by return of post a letter, over which I shed many tears, begging him to reconsider it. But of course he had made up his mind, and I soon became reconciled to the prospect before me. I had read *Tom Brown's School-days*, then a new book, and the idea of becoming a member of a large and famous school was by no means disagreeable to me.

Early in November this year (1861) I dislocated my elbow at football, and as soon as it was possible for me to travel I was sent to my home in London. My father's health, which had been a cause of anxiety, on and off, for many years, had during the last twelve months gone from bad to worse, and on my arrival I found him in bed. I had been at home a week or more when one morning (November 17th) I was told that he wished to see me. I went cheerfully into his room, bidding him good-morn-

REMINISCENCES

ing as usual, when to my amazement he told me that he was going to die, spoke his last words to me, and dismissed me: and in the afternoon he died. Until I entered his room that day it had never occurred to me, strange as it may seem, that his life was in danger, and the shock was great in proportion.

What his loss was to me, coming at that stage of my existence, I will not attempt to say. With all his strong affection for his own son and daughters, and his keen interest in everything that concerned them, he certainly had not the special gift of falling naturally and without effort into easy and familiar intercourse with young children. I was very fond of him, and often found his conversation most interesting and amusing, but I never reached the stage of being entirely at my ease with him, as I already was with some other grown-ups. He was inclined to be irascible over my shortcomings; and although he very seldom punished me—I do not believe that he ever did so after I had gone to school—I was rather afraid of him. But, if he had lived two or three years longer, we should no doubt have been on the most intimate and affectionate terms.

My mother was thus left a widow at the age of 40, with five children, myself, the eldest by five years, and four daughters. My father's official salary had made his total income a very comfortable one according to the standard of those days: this of course disappeared, and it also unfortunately happened that there was an ambiguity in his will, which caused his executors to place his estate in Chancery. My mother's income was thus, for a

LORD KILBRACKEN

time, seriously diminished: she decided, however, not to part with her house in Gloucester Place, which was rather a large one, but to live in it very quietly and economically until her affairs should improve, which in course of time they were bound to do.

My Irish grandfather died in 1863, having survived his son by about eighteen months; and the Killegar property thereupon came to me, my mother having a life-interest in it; but my grandfather, being then eighty-eight years old, had shortly before his death granted a twenty-one years' lease of Killegar House and demesne to the son who had lived with him. My mother and I thus became on his death entitled to the rents of the Killegar estate, but could not live there even if we had wished to do so, which, so far as my mother was concerned, was very far indeed from being the case. Whatever may have been the motives of those who suggested and carried out these arrangements, they had, undoubtedly, a very beneficial effect on the course of my subsequent life. It was far better for me, even at the cost of some pecuniary loss, to be thus virtually compelled to make my home in England, and to be freed from all risk of settling down into the position in which I should have found myself as a resident Irish landlord.

From my mother's family, now that she was so much in need of sympathy, and especially from her father and sisters, she and her children received all that the greatest kindness and affection could suggest. During the remainder of her father's life Voelas was to us a second home; in the summer of 1863 Cefnamwlch, my grandfather's house in Car-

REMINISCENCES

narvonshire, was lent to her; and, in short, no sort of help, moral or material, was wanting.

My mother lived till 1907, when I was in my sixtieth year. Any panegyric of her by her son would be as superfluous and displeasing to all who knew her intimately as it would have been to herself. And I have the same feeling, though in a different degree, about her two youngest sisters, Louisa and Frances Wynne, who never married, but after their father's death lived in Park Street, and had a delightful little cottage in North Wales, Craig Lledr, about six miles from Voelas. The terms on which we lived with them prevent me from describing them or singing their praises. Of her eldest sister, Mrs. Somers Cocks, I shall, for similar reasons, say very little, but I must just record the fact that she and her husband, who though less than an uncle by blood was more than an uncle in "love and affection," were in every way most kind, helpful, and sympathetic. At their house on the banks of the Thames at Marlow we used to pay long visits *en famille*, and every summer, for some years, it was lent to my mother for two or three months. The Thames was then very unlike what it is now; except on Saturday afternoons and Sundays one hardly saw a pleasure boat upon it that did not belong to a neighbour; steam-launches were very few, and motor-boats of course unknown. My uncle's boats were at our disposal, and my recollections of those days, when I came to know familiarly almost every yard of the sixteen miles of river between Henley and Maidenhead, are among the most delightful that I still retain.

The life which we, my mother, my sisters, and

myself, lived during those years from 1862 to about 1869 or 1870 was an unusually quiet one. Except my mother's relations above mentioned, it is no great exaggeration to say that, whether in Gloucester Place or at Marlow, we never saw anyone; and even at Voelas, though the house was a large one, owing to my grandfather's age there were seldom any guests besides ourselves. To be sure there were a few old friends who occasionally called on my mother in London, and at Marlow we became intimate with one of the clergy, Walter Hoare, who had been a celebrated cricketer and oarsman at Eton and Oxford, and through him with some of his family. There were, no doubt, a few other exceptions, but as a rule we lived entirely by ourselves, and hardly ever accepted or gave an invitation of any kind. This manner of life perfectly suited my mother, in the frame of mind in which she then was; it also suited my tastes exactly. I disliked every kind of society other than that of my relations and a small number of intimate friends, and was only too happy to spend my time during the holidays either alone (for I was much alone) or with no other company than that of my mother and sisters. This way of living continued, as far as I remember, until I had been a year or two at Oxford; it was then gradually modified, and by the time I had taken my degree my mother and sisters were living quietly indeed, but on the whole much like other people.

CHAPTER II

I now return to the events which followed after my father's death.

After a few weeks in London we went down to Voelas for Christmas. During the time that we spent there I made my first essay as a shooter, and I have still a clear mental picture of the scene. The party consisted of my Uncle Charles Wynne, his three sons, Charlie, Heneage, and Seymour, Wood the keeper, and myself. I carried a single-barrelled gun, while the rest of the party were unarmed and prepared to act as beaters. We sallied forth in line abreast into a plantation of very small young trees, and very soon a large hare got up on the left of the line and raced across our front, at a distance of about five yards. As it passed me I blazed at it; it collapsed, and on being picked up was found to have a hole in its body nearly large enough to admit a man's hand and arm. It was, of course, utterly spoilt and useless; but it was at any rate dead, and I returned home triumphant.

From Voelas at the beginning of February I went to Rugby for the first time: the Christmas holidays were longer and ended later than is now usual, as we had only two holidays in the year, eight weeks in the summer and seven in the winter. My first impressions of my new school were quite satisfactory. I was taken there by my father's friend, Mr.

LORD KILBRACKEN

Adderley; he was a Governor of the school, and himself took me to Dr. Temple's study, and saw my name entered in his book. I have a very vivid recollection of the interview, and of the first words that the great man ever addressed to me; they were not words of welcome or of encouragement or of moral advice; he merely remarked, after looking me up and down, "When you have been here a week or two you will have learned not to stand with your hand in your pocket." But he said this with a broad smile which prevented any appearance of harshness. Mr. Jex-Blake, subsequently Head Master of Rugby and Dean of Wells, who was to be my house master and tutor, was very kind and friendly, and I was much impressed by the atmosphere of comfort, warmth, and good feeding which seemed to prevail; an atmosphere which, as a part of school life, was more or less new to me. The system, then as now, was that the boys slept in small dormitories containing from four to nine or ten beds apiece, besides which every boy either had a study to himself, or, if he was not high enough in the house for that privilege, shared one with another boy. My study-companion was E. P. Elmhirst, rather older than I was, and in after life very well known as a writer on hunting and sporting subjects, generally under the name of "Brooksby." He was not what would be called at Oxford "a reading man," but he was quite kind to me, and we got on very well. In a few weeks I was very sufficiently at home both in the house and in the school, and, so far as I remember, perfectly happy. My Uncle Charles had asked a friend of his, Mr. Rose, to write to his son, who was, like me,

REMINISCENCES

in Jex-Blake's house, telling him to be kind to me. This Mr. Rose did, and his son replied, expressing his complete willingness to befriend me; "but," he added, "he seems perfectly well able to take care of himself." This, I think, was true.

I was placed in the Upper Fifth Form, which was the highest to which a new boy could be allotted; and there I found myself under the tuition of a remarkably good teacher, Charles Evans, who afterwards made for himself a considerable reputation as Head Master of King Edward's School, Birmingham, and as an authority on education generally. He soon discovered that I had been badly grounded, and paid me a good deal of individual attention, working me vigorously at my weak subjects, for which I am now very grateful to him, though at the time I did not altogether appreciate it. A good many years afterwards he was a member of the Rugby Governing Body over which I presided as chairman, a curious inversion of our respective parts.

I got into the Twenty at the end of my first term, and, at the end of my second, won my place in the Sixth, but, being under 16, I had, under the rule then in force, to remain in the Twenty till the summer of 1863, when I was promoted in due course. I thus spent the last three years of my school life in the Sixth under Dr. Temple, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury. His reputation as a Head Master is well known, and it certainly does him no more than justice. His manner, though genial and friendly, was rather abrupt and rough, his voice was harsh, and he was not a very good teacher of the niceties of classical scholarship. But, when one has said this, one has said everything that

can be said by way of unfavourable criticism; and these defects, none of them of the first importance, were at once forgotten by all, whether masters or boys, who came into close contact with him. His power of kindling enthusiastic affection and reverence was such as I have never seen equalled except by Mr. Gladstone: his sermons in chapel (and he preached nearly every Sunday in term-time) were admirable in themselves, and their effect was greatly intensified by the undemonstrative but irrepressible and overpowering fervour and emotion with which they were delivered. I believe that many of his surviving pupils must be to this day conscious, as I certainly am myself, of his influence—I might almost say, of his presence—as an abiding force, “a stream of tendency, not ourselves, which makes for righteousness.”

Dr. Temple's deficiencies as a teacher of the refinements of classical scholarship were to a great extent compensated by the merits of the Sixth Form Composition Master, A. W. Potts, afterwards first Head Master of Fettes College; a brilliant specimen of the celebrated type of scholar produced at Shrewsbury under Butler and Kennedy, and finished at Cambridge. To his teaching during those three years I owe by far the greater part of what I learned at Rugby in the way of classical scholarship; and if we Rugbeians of that day more than held our own, as we certainly did, in the competitions for Classical Scholarships at Oxford and Cambridge, it was to him that our successes were mainly due.

The four years and three-quarters which I spent at Rugby seem to me, looking back upon them, to

REMINISCENCES

have been a thoroughly happy and prosperous time. Rugby needs no praises of mine ; but I cannot help saying that the standards and traditions of the place seem to me to have been, when I was there, eminently good, and the masters were certainly an exceptionally strong lot. Among the boys there was a sprinkling of the sons of rich men and country gentlemen, but I should say that the fathers of nearly 90 per cent. were men who worked, or had worked, in some profession or business ; and I need hardly add that this was a great advantage for the school. There was a rather strong infusion of the sons of Lancashire men of business and manufacturers, and a good many of these, no doubt, were wealthy men, but hardly any, whether from Lancashire or elsewhere, belonged to the undesirable sort of rich people, and the Lancashire boys were distinctly a good element. We did well, though one or two other schools did better, in scholarship ; the standard of cricket, as tested by the number of "blues" that we produced, was decidedly high ; and it was undoubtedly also high in football, but, as we then had the Rugby game pretty much to ourselves, and never played any "foreign" match, there were no means of testing our merits, and there was no such thing as a football Fifteen. Our little Parliament, known as "Big-side Levée," had made, and used from time to time to alter and amend, the well-known Code of Rules which has now gone forth to all lands, and their words to the ends of the world. For all I know, I may possibly have myself proposed or seconded some rule which now governs football alike in England and at the Antipodes. It was not till some years after I left Rugby that foot-

ball began to be extensively played by men, and that a Committee was formed which soon supplanted Big-side Levée as the law-givers of the game which Rugby had invented and developed. When I was at the India Office, our present King, George V, then Prince of Wales, came to a luncheon given there by the Secretary of State; he was then about to start for his first trip to India, and in conversation he confided to me that the one drawback to his enjoyment of the prospect was the thought that he would miss seeing the New Zealand team play Rugby football in this country; and he added, not in the least knowing that I was a Rugbeian, "It is the finest game in the world." I must say, if I may presume to bracket my own opinion with his, that I agree with him. When I was young I enjoyed games of many kinds very thoroughly, but a Rugby house-match at football remains in my mind as the greatest and finest of them all.

The extraordinary spread of Rugby football within the last fifty years is no doubt mainly owing to the intrinsic excellence of the game; but another cause, not so obvious, has certainly had something to do with it. Between 1852 and 1877 several important public schools were, one may say, created, and six of them were created by Rugby assistant-masters; Marlborough by Cotton, afterwards Bishop of Calcutta; Wellington by Benson, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury; Clifton by Percival, afterwards Bishop of Hereford; Haileybury by Arthur Butler; Fettes by A. W. Potts, and Bedford by J. S. Philpotts. Among the Rugby traditions thus disseminated were in most cases, if not in all, the rules of Rugby football, and a result of this was

REMINISCENCES

the creation of a large class of players who were keen to carry on at the Universities and afterwards the game that they had learnt at school. As soon as it became well known outside of the Rugby Close, its inherent merits did the rest.

During my first football term I was quite useless, partly because the game was new to me, but mainly, I believe, because I was just then growing at an alarming rate. When I went to Rugby, aged fourteen and a half, I was not tall for my age, and my friend Lord Justice Farwell has often told me of his first impression of me as "a small new boy walking across the Close in deep mourning"; but, by the time I was sixteen, I was over six feet high. In my second football season I improved considerably: in my third I was a good useful forward player and got my "cap"; and in my fourth and last, I believe I might say that I was reckoned among the best "forwards" in the school, and should certainly have been in the Fifteen if it had then existed. In cricket I had not four but five seasons: in my fourth I got into the Twenty-two, and, in my fifth, into the Eleven. A very celebrated cricketer, Bernard Pauncefote, was then Head of the Eleven, and a still more distinguished one (I am fond of mentioning this) was tried for the Eleven in the same year as myself, with the result that I was put in four places from the bottom, while he did not get in at all. His name was William Yardley. In telling this story I feel bound to add the fact that he was two years younger than I was, and was handicapped by an accident which had injured his foot in the previous Christmas holidays. Both Pauncefote and Yardley were in the very first class of amateurs, and

LORD KILBRACKEN

Yardley was the first man to play an innings of 100 runs in a University match. This he did in 1870, and he repeated the performance in 1872.

I was very fond of racquets, fives, and bat-fives, and played them all with a good deal of success; I mention this by way of contrast to the complete indifference to all games which afterwards came over me comparatively early in life.

Apart from my school work, I used in those days to read a great deal, as indeed I had done before and have done ever since; but seldom, if ever, then or at any time afterwards, did I read a book for the sake of edification, unless I was able to take pleasure in reading it: nor can I remember reading at any period of my life on a fixed plan, or otherwise than as was convenient and agreeable to me. I was at all times an ardent reader of all the poetry I could get hold of, and I remember how this habit was stimulated by the appearance, when I was fourteen or fifteen, of Palgrave's *Golden Treasury*, which seemed to open new worlds to me. And I should be ungrateful if I did not mention the various books of selections from the best English poets, chosen for translation into Latin and Greek verse, which were put into our hands at Rugby: they were, in fact, excellent anthologies of English poetry, and did much to increase my knowledge and to spur me on to wider reading. This may seem a small thing to record, but it certainly had a great effect on me; and I must add that, whatever others may feel about the practice of translating English poetry into Greek and Latin verse, it certainly was to me individually of the greatest possible use, not only by making me at home with the classical languages,

REMINISCENCES

but by the mental training which it gave me; a training of which I feel the beneficial effects to this day. This I say of the practice of translation; the writing of so-called "original" verse in Latin or Greek I am not so much concerned to defend.

I have already said that I spent my last three school years in the Sixth Form, and in each of those years I succeeded in obtaining a place in the summer examination which entitled me to one of the five exhibitions then awarded annually, after a competitive examination of the Form, to boys leaving the school; but of course I did not accept one until my last year. When I left I was Head of the School.

In November, 1864, I was sent up to Oxford, at the age of seventeen, to compete for the Balliol Scholarship. I was not successful, but took a good place. The two first places were gained by R. L. Nettleship, afterwards well known as a Fellow and Tutor of the College, who perished in a snowstorm on Mont Blanc, and R. T. Reid, afterwards Lord Loreburn and Lord Chancellor. In the following November, 1865, I again competed, this being my last chance. Only two scholarships were offered on this occasion, and I was second in the examination. This, as I was afterwards told by several of the electors, was their unanimous opinion. But some of them thought that the work of a boy called Goodlake, though by marks inferior to mine, showed more promise; there was a division, and Goodlake was elected by (I believe) a majority of one. Among those who told me the story was Jowett, afterwards my tutor, and, later on, Master of the College; but he never said anything to me about it

LORD KILBRACKEN

until one day when I was staying with him, I suppose about twenty-five years after the event: he then added, "At this distance of time there can be no harm in telling you that I voted for you." Goodlake, whose acquaintance I made on coming into residence, was a strange being, not a bad fellow, but hopelessly shy and awkward; he had a portentous verbal memory, and had left his school (Cheltenham) some months before in order to cram for the scholarship with an Oxford coach. He got a first class in Moderations and a second in the Final Schools; more than this I cannot say, and the compiler of the Balliol Register, recently published, was unable to collect any facts whatsoever as to his subsequent career.

The boy who was first in the examination, Clark by name, was a very different article, though he resembled Goodlake in being shy; he was, in fact, the shyest individual, and (regard being had to his qualities) the most genuinely humble one, that I have ever known. His nickname in the College was the Greek word "*Ptōx*," "the timid croucher," and Jowett once spoke to me of his shyness as "amounting to a paralysis of the mind." It is true that he used visibly to start and give a little gasp when one addressed him. I took some pains to know him, and partially succeeded; I liked him much. He seemed to have few friends in the College or out of it, and not many acquaintances: he was brilliantly clever, and read nearly all day long; I don't think he ever played a game. Among his numerous distinctions were the Ireland Scholarship for Classics, a first in Mathematical Moderations, the Taylorian Scholarship for French and German, and a First in Greats

REMINISCENCES

—a fine mixed bag. He became a fellow of Queen's and a resident Don, but he died young.

Although I thus missed the Scholarship, I was elected to an Exhibition, the money value of which was not much less ; not that my mother would have allowed any question of money to weigh with her for a moment in choosing my college. The question arose whether I should go to Balliol as an Exhibitioner or compete for a scholarship elsewhere ; and it was mainly owing to the advice of my Rugby tutor, Jex-Blake, that the decision was in favour of Balliol. For this, as for many other things, I owe him a debt of gratitude. I was much pressed by some of the Rugby masters to go to Cambridge, and no doubt the kind of scholarship which was my strong point would at that time have been a more paying concern there than at Oxford. My admiration and, I may say, my affection for Cambridge, where I have had many friends among the residents have always been great, and have steadily grown with years ; nevertheless, I am very glad that, "in spite of all temptations to belong to other nations," I went to Oxford. My life, if I had gone to Cambridge, would undoubtedly have taken a colour completely different from that under which I have known it ; and, although I might have found it easier to win high distinction at Cambridge, I am quite sure that Oxford, and the consequences of Oxford, were what was best for me individually in the long run.

I left Rugby at the end of July, 1866, and I will here mention a few of the Rugby friends with whom I remained in touch after school-days. Those that first occur to me are R. W. Ingham, son of Sir

LORD KILBRACKEN

James Ingham, the Chief Police Magistrate, who is now himself a distinguished County Court Judge; W. E. Goschen, who played with me in the Eleven of 1866, was my contemporary at Oxford, entered the diplomatic service, and was Ambassador at Berlin when the Great War began—it is remarkable that at that moment our Ambassadors at Berlin (Goschen) and at Vienna (de Bunsen), and the Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Nicolson, now Lord Carnock), were all men who had been among my contemporaries at Rugby; Albert Gray, now a K.C. and K.C.B. and Counsel to the Chairman of Committees in the House of Lords, who has always been one of my best and most intimate friends; and, last but not least, Robert Tillard, son of a Huntingdonshire Squire, who from Rugby went to Cambridge, was trained for Orders under Dr. Vaughan at Doncaster, held livings successively in Shropshire and Norfolk, and died in the summer of 1915. All those that I have so far mentioned were, like me, in Jex-Blake's house; in the other boarding-houses my chief friends were George Thorold, who preceded me as Head of the School, now living as a country gentleman in Devonshire; William Lee-Warner, a very distinguished Indian civilian, whose name will be again mentioned later on; H. S. Theobald, who afterwards was with me at Balliol, had a very successful career at the Bar, and is celebrated in the world of art for having gradually formed, with no special advantages except his own taste and judgment, a collection of etchings and engravings, the principal part of which he sold, when his eyesight began to fail, for (I believe) £83,000; and lastly

REMINISCENCES

George Farwell, who likewise went to Balliol, had likewise a brilliant career as a barrister, became first a High Court Judge and then a Lord Justice, and died a few months ago (1916).

There were three country houses, besides those of my grandfather in Wales and my uncle at Marlow, at which I used in my school-days to stay pretty often; namely, Hams in Warwickshire, Betteshanger in East Kent, and Chesters in Northumberland. Hams belonged to Mr. Adderley, M.P. for Staffordshire and afterwards created Lord Norton, a great friend of my father's; he was most kind to me, and I was on intimate terms with his eldest son, a little older than myself, and with the rest of his family. Betteshanger, a place which was destined to become very familiar to me, was the home of Sir Walter James, afterwards Lord Northbourne, another very intimate friend of my father's, who, if my mother had died before I came of age, would under my father's will have been my guardian. He had a son and a daughter, the son being a year older than I was; I have already mentioned him as a Radley school-fellow. Lady James possessed some moorland farms in Redesdale, Northumberland, which afforded good grouse-shooting; there was no house on the property, but there was a gamekeeper, and a couple of shooters could be accommodated at one of the farm-houses. In 1863 I accepted an invitation to accompany Walter James the younger for a fortnight's sojourn in this happy hunting-ground: the invitation was repeated in the following year, and my annual visit to Redesdale became an institution which lasted for many years. The life we led was in those early days a very simple one,

LORD KILBRACKEN

and our accommodation and food were somewhat rough and ready; but it was all very enjoyable, the inhabitants were an interesting race, and the country was wild and, in its way, very beautiful. A few years later a shooting-lodge was built, the ladies of the family began to come up in the shooting season, and the character of our sojourn there was changed, but it was always a very pleasant incident in my existence, and did much to encourage my intimacy with the whole family.

My visits to Chesters, near Hexham, which were frequent between the years 1864 and 1890, were of a very interesting and peculiar kind. Its owner, Mr. John Clayton, was a remarkable man: he had been for many years the principal solicitor in Newcastle, in which capacity he had been one of the most influential personages in the North of England, and had incidentally made a very large fortune, in addition to the estate, already large, which he inherited from his father and brothers. He was a bachelor, and when I first knew him was over seventy years old, had retired from business, and lived at Chesters, in a beautiful situation on the North Tyne, with two unmarried sisters of about his own age. His house was built actually on the line of the Roman Wall, and he was devoted to the study of Roman antiquities. Whenever any land containing a bit of the Wall was for sale, he bought it, and when he died, at the age of ninety-seven or ninety-eight, he possessed, I believe, over twenty miles of it continuously. He lived comfortably, at the rate, I suppose, of not more than three or four thousand a year, and at his death his property was valued at considerably over a million. He was, to anyone

REMINISCENCES

who cared for antiquities, a most interesting companion, and there was hardly a family or an individual of any importance in the counties of Northumberland, Durham, and Cumberland with whose private affairs he was not intimately acquainted; but he was absolutely discreet, and never said a word that could be complained of by any living person. With him lived his two unmarried sisters, both, like their brother, born in the eighteenth century, and the interior economy of his house was old-fashioned to an incredible degree, reminding me always of the manners and customs of Scott's *Antiquary*. I came to know him through Sir Walter and Lady James, who were old friends and clients of his; perceiving that I was, at the age of sixteen or seventeen, genuinely interested in his favourite pursuits, he made a friend of me, and until his death, more than twenty years later, an autumn seldom passed without my paying him a visit. Chesters and its inhabitants were at that time like nothing else in the world, and I look back to the days that I spent there with special interest and pleasure. Perhaps it may be partly the effect of old associations, and partly that of the wild and beautiful scenery through which the Roman Wall runs; but I have always reckoned its remains among the finest and most impressive sights that I know.

CHAPTER III

In October, 1866, I went into residence at Balliol. The number of undergraduates resident in the College or in lodgings was then, I think, less than 100, and everyone had rooms in College for his first three years. I was put into rooms in the old quadrangle, close to the chapel; there I remained for two terms, and then was ejected in order that the picturesque old building containing them might be pulled down and replaced by the present unsightly block, a sad change for the worse. The rooms into which I was moved were in the garden quadrangle and on the ground-floor; they had just been vacated by Frank Charteris, elder brother (but long since dead) of the present Lord Wemyss; a very popular member of the College, in whose time the rooms had been a place of general resort, while those social spirits, who had not time or inclination to go round to the door of the rooms, could always start a conversation by the simple process of opening one of the windows from outside. The traditions adhering to the rooms did not all at once expire upon the change of occupancy, and I daresay I benefited by them to some small extent from the social point of view; nevertheless I had to discourage them, or I should never have done any reading. Above me on the same staircase lived Adolphus Liddell, from that date onwards one of my greatest friends, and

REMINISCENCES

Henry Primrose, who afterwards entered the Civil Service as a clerk in the Treasury, rose to be Chairman of the Board of Inland Revenue, and is now Chairman of the Welsh Church Commission and a Privy Councillor. We three used to breakfast together daily, and our little society, while it lasted, was a very pleasant one.

I must here mention the name of Alfred Barratt, to whose friendship in my early days at Balliol I owed much. He had been in the same house with me at Rugby, but left at the end of my first term, gaining a scholarship at Balliol. He had, certainly, one of the most acute and powerful intellects that I have ever known; but he was also naturally indolent, very sociable, and in small and harmless ways rather self-indulgent. He used at Oxford to get up very late, never played any game, took hardly any exercise, and was always ready to sit talking and smoking, or often playing cards. He was very popular, and on friendly terms with all, reading men or non-reading men, who were worth knowing in the College. How and when he himself read no one ever knew: but he read everything and knew everything, and his record in the Schools was unique—five firsts: two in Moderations (Classics and Mathematics) and three in the Final Schools (Classics, Mathematics, and Law and History—these last two subjects were then included in one School). It was an amazing performance. He was then elected a Fellow of Brasenose, and began to read for the Bar in the chambers of another Rugbeian, Horace Davey, afterwards a Lord of Appeal, who used always thenceforward to speak of Barratt as the possessor of the most remarkable mind and the

LORD KILBRACKEN

greatest aptitude for legal studies that he had ever known among the younger men at the Bar. But when he had read for a year or two he had a very bad attack of small-pox, which endangered his life: he recovered, but was never the same man afterwards. His natural indolence and want of ambition were perceptibly increased, and he practically ceased to take any interest in his legal work. He had good private means, married, wrote two books on metaphysical subjects, in which he was keenly interested, devoted much time to music, and lived a pleasant social life in London for a few years, during which time I saw a good deal of him: he was then seized by a sudden and violent disease of the brain, an after-effect, no doubt, of his previous severe illness, and died young.

The Master of the College, Robert Scott, was Master in name only: the Master *de facto* was Jowett, who commanded a permanent majority of the votes of the Fellows, and used his powers, I believe, rather oppressively towards the Master *de jure*. He chose me as one of his pupils, and was always very kind to me from the first: but to a freshman his kindness was apt to be rather embarrassing, for he seldom started a subject of conversation himself, and would generally snub the attempts of his companion if he thought them trivial or uninteresting, as indeed they generally were. I remember being one of half a dozen nervous undergraduates at breakfast with him, when one of the party, who had some reputation as a wit, made a facetious remark about the new College buildings then in course of erection. A short silence followed, during which Jowett seemed to be con-

REMINISCENCES

sidering the matter ; he then asked briskly, "Do you mean that for a joke?" Now, I am quite certain, from my intimate knowledge of his mind and his manners, that he did not mean to be unkind. He really was not quite sure whether the remark was or was not to be regarded as a joke, and he saw no harm in asking the question. But the effect was of course appalling. I shall never forget the misery of my first walk with him : I had been about a week in College and had not been prepared for his peculiar ways. We started towards Headington, but when we got opposite to the gate of Queen's it began to rain. Without a word Jowett turned into the Queen's quadrangle, and for nearly an hour and a half we walked round and round the cloister. During the whole of this time he spontaneously addressed only one remark to me ; he asked me whether he was right in thinking that I was the son of Mr. J. R. Godley, of Christ Church, whom he had known slightly, and with whose reputation he was well acquainted. Being informed that this was the case, he said no more, and I feebly tried at intervals the sort of subjects that one used to discuss at breakfast or dinner with one's tutor at Rugby. To these Jowett gave no encouragement whatsoever, and after each brief colloquy silence resumed her reign, until I had nerved myself for a fresh effort, equally futile. I am quite sure that he had no idea of my sufferings, and meant only to be kind and edifying. In a very short time one came to know how to talk to him, and before I had taken my degree I was very nearly, if not quite, at my ease with him, and was able thoroughly to enjoy his companionship. Owing mainly, no doubt, to

his long habit of talking to pupils, he seemed to be haunted by the idea that it was his duty to edify and improve those with whom he conversed, and to advise them on questions of conduct. He had, of course, far too much tact and common sense, and too great a sense of humour, to do this offensively or at random, but one was conscious that the tendency was always there, not far from the surface, and he was no respecter of persons; he had plenty of courage and self-confidence,¹ and would have been perfectly ready to give unasked advice to the Prime Minister on politics or to the Archbishop of Canterbury on ecclesiastical matters, if he thought there was an opportunity for doing so. A good instance of this propensity is to be found in his *Life* by Campbell and Abbott, in the shape of a letter to Lord Lansdowne, who had been his pupil at Balliol, on his appointment to a political office, telling him how he ought to conduct himself as a Minister of the Crown. This characteristic of his, far from being irksome, was to me a matter of constant amusement; I used to watch for its appearance, and to enjoy it when it came.

Of the great work that he did and the wide influence that he exercised both in his College and in the University I need say nothing. But as a College tutor he left something to be desired; it is hardly too much to say that he took no notice at all of his pupils unless for one reason or another he thought them interesting. There is a true story—it hap-

¹ My friend Lady Oxford, who knew Jowett well, denies this. As regards his relations with her sex, she may be right; as regards his relations with men, what I have said is certainly true.

REMINISCENCES

pened just before I went up—of his having given a severe jobation to an undergraduate of three years' standing in the College, who had done very badly in "Collections." As the man was leaving the Hall, Jowett called him back and asked, "Who is your tutor?" To which he received the disconcerting answer, "You are, sir." Of me he took some notice, but not much, until, with hardly any help or encouragement from him, I had got the Latin Verse Prize and the Hertford Scholarship. He then sent for me and desired me to do for him a copy of Greek Iambics, by which he might judge whether it was worth while for me to go in for the Ireland. This I did, and the question was decided in the affirmative, with the result which I have recorded upon a subsequent page. Thenceforward and throughout the later part of my time at Oxford, and indeed to the end of his life in 1893, he was to me a most kind, interesting, and helpful friend; I can never be grateful enough to him. But the help that he gave me in my work for the schools was very small indeed.

The word "Collections" reminds me of another story of Jowett, which to those who knew him well is highly characteristic. He had lectured during the term on St. John's Gospel, and in Collections set a paper of questions to those who had heard him. Among them was one whom I will call Mr. Smith; he, as Jowett knew very well, was a Roman Catholic. This man so framed his answers as to make them, in his own opinion, a proof that Jowett's teaching was tantamount to a denial of the divinity of Christ. When he went up in his turn to have his paper reviewed, he was eagerly looking

LORD KILBRACKEN

forward to a theological discussion. But Jowett, having read his paper, merely asked, "Mr. Smith, are you a Quaker?" and, on receiving a negative answer, dismissed him without another word.

I will insert one more story, which shows a very different side of him. I was staying with him at Balliol, and at dinner-time found myself one of about twenty punctual guests assembled in the drawing-room, but our host had not appeared. Time passed, and there was still no sign of the Master, and no explanation of his absence. At the end of an hour he suddenly entered the room, uttered no word of apology, but shook hands with the company, and we went into dinner as if nothing had happened. Next day we learned that an undergraduate in the College had gone suddenly out of his mind, and seemed likely to become violent, and that Jowett had been sitting with him, keeping him quiet, until the necessary arrangements could be made. But Jowett himself never mentioned the subject.

His strongest point, I think, as a trainer of young men was his high standard of duty and his intolerance of any but the loftiest, and at the same time the most practical aims, in whatever was to be undertaken. By steadily adhering to this line, by acting accordingly, and by always assuming, unless and until he was painfully convinced of the contrary, that his pupils shared his aspirations, he certainly did much to raise and to inspire them. A weak point, unfortunately an important one, was that he was not always a good judge of character. I could even now give instances of the way in which he sometimes misjudged his pupils, and his recom-

REMINISCENCES

mentation of a given person for a given post could by no means be accepted as final; like so many kindhearted people, he was apt to think more about the needs of his *protégés* than about their qualifications for the post in question. He succeeded Scott as Master of the College just before I took my degree, and, during the three-and-twenty years that followed, my visits to the Lodge were frequent, and did much to preserve in me the pleasant feeling that I was still a living member of the University; a feeling that I did not lose till two or three years after his death.

We had at that time a very strong set of Dons at Balliol, but I shall mention only one or two with whom I was specially concerned.

Next to Jowett, the one to whom I owed most was certainly Edwin Palmer, brother of Lord Chancellor Selborne; he was an admirable scholar, and, for me individually, the best teacher that I ever had to do with. His lectures on Virgil were an epoch in my existence, as they were in those of many other learners. He was good enough in 1870, when he had become Professor of Latin and therefore *ex officio* a Fellow of Corpus, to give me some special coaching for the Ireland Scholarship, which I got in that year; and I could wish that I had had the same great advantage a couple of years sooner (1868), when, having gone in for it without any hope of success or special preparation, I ran second or third—I forget which. In the intermediate year, 1869, my chance was destroyed by an attack of scarlet fever: Jowett, however, insisted on my rising from my bed to compete, which I did, sitting by myself in a separate room in the Schools, and feel-

ing so weak and ill that I had to knock off writing and give myself a rest from time to time. I was bracketed second on this occasion, but the honour was hardly worth the risk to my health which I certainly incurred.

Thomas Hill Green was, next to those whom I have mentioned, the Don who most influenced me as an undergraduate; but he would have influenced me far more if I had then been able to appreciate him, which I certainly was not. It seems to me, as I look back, that while I was in the undergraduate stage at Oxford I was little more than an enlarged schoolboy; as yet I took not the slightest interest in the subjects which Green taught, namely, Philosophy in its various forms; and his lofty and mystical character was then almost entirely above the reach of my understanding. It was not till I was nearer thirty than twenty that, in the course of my frequent visits to Oxford, I came to know well and in some degree to understand and appreciate both Green and his friend and disciple Lewis Nettleship, with whom I might say that I was beginning to be intimate shortly before his death on Mont Blanc. Two finer and nobler characters it would not be easy to find. Green was, like myself, a Rugbeian; he was very kind to me as an undergraduate, in spite of my obvious want of interest in the studies with which he was specially concerned; and of course he could not fail to make a deep and most salutary impression on me, as of one who lived apart from and above us, "moving about in worlds not realized" nor probably realizable by the uninspired human intellect.

The part which the other Fellows of the College

REMINISCENCES

played in my affairs was not such as to demand any mention here; but I must name two Fellows of other Colleges who in different ways did much for me. One of them was W. W. Jackson, Fellow and subsequently for many years Rector of Exeter, whom I have already mentioned as a temporary Master at Radley. He was also a great friend of the James family, and I often met him at Betteshanger. He was most kind and friendly to me during my undergraduate years, and I learned much from him—more than he, I am sure, has any idea of. He became, and remains to this day, one of my greatest friends, and in later days, during his tenure of the Rectorship, I often had the pleasure of being his guest, both at Oxford and at his delightful home in Westmorland. The other, who was at that time a conspicuous figure in the University, was John Conington, Professor of Latin and Fellow of Corpus. He was a Rugbeian, and I was specially commended to him from Rugby; he at once took me under his wing, and during my first three years I saw a great deal of him. He was a typical scholar of the mid-Victorian type, with an amazing verbal knowledge of the Classics, and a supreme delight in the art of Latin and Greek composition, especially verse composition. During my first year I attended his lectures on this last-mentioned subject, which involved the writing of verse-exercises for his criticism; when he had seen some specimens of my work, he told my friend Papillon of Merton (who repeated it to me) that I “wrote Latin verses like an angel,” and no doubt this favourable opinion helped to give him an interest in me by which I greatly profited. He had a verbal memory which certainly rivalled

LORD KILBRACKEN

that of Macaulay ; and in the course of our walks I have known him recite not only classical poetry, English, Greek, and Latin, but all sorts of out-of-the-way pieces, old prize-poems, University skits and satires, thousands of lines by the hour together, never hesitating for a word. His interests were by no means confined to Greek and Latin, or even to literature : his knowledge of University history and of the politics of the lasty fifty or sixty years was remarkable, and he told me that he had had at one time serious thoughts of trying for a seat in Parliament. From this he had certainly done well to abstain : the career was one for which, with all his extraordinary abilities, he was very ill qualified. Towards the end of the long vacation of 1869 I went to stay with him at his home in Boston : here he lived alone with his old blind mother, and his filial attentions and care for her were beautiful to see. We were a party of three ; no other guest appeared during my stay of a week, and one day was exactly like another, always including a long walk after luncheon, and a curious game, played with counters, in which the old lady took part, after dinner. I thoroughly enjoyed the time that I spent there, and departed, expecting to see Conington again at Oxford a few days later. But when I arrived there I heard that he was ill, and, next day, that he was dead. He was, I think, about forty-four when he died. The loss to me was great : he was certainly, in a peculiar way, one of the most interesting men that I have ever known, and it is a privilege which I greatly value to have been intimate with him.

My friend Andrew Lang used to tell the follow-

REMINISCENCES

ing story: having returned to Oxford at the beginning of that October term, 1869, he was walking past the gate of Oriel, when he saw Conington, whom he knew well as an acquaintance, though not intimately, standing under the lamp-post which is situated in the middle of the road, between Oriel and Christ Church, and looking steadfastly towards Corpus, the College to which, as Latin Professor, he belonged, and for which he had a very special affection. Meeting a friend of Conington's shortly afterwards, he mentioned what he had seen, and was informed that he must be mistaken, as Conington was very ill and had not come up. Lang, however, was perfectly certain that he had seen him in broad daylight at a distance of five yards, and remained unconvinced until he heard, next day, of Conington's death at the time when he had seen him or his semblance on the preceding day. The only comment that I shall make on this story is that it was quite impossible for anyone, who had once come to know Conington by sight, to mistake anyone else for him, so peculiar was his appearance. As to this, I am sure I should be supported by anyone who knew him, however slightly.

I must record with regret that during the whole of my time at Oxford I never took part in the debates at the Union. This was partly, I am afraid, because in my College it was unfashionable to do so; and partly because a debate, to which I listened in my first or second term, on the comparative merits of Tennyson and Wordsworth, seemed to me so utterly dull, dismal, and puerile that I never repeated the experiment. Probably my judgment of the performance was not far wrong; but I never-

LORD KILBRACKEN

theless made a great mistake in abstaining, and have been sorry for it ever since.

In my second term I competed for the Hertford Scholarship, and was fourth: in the following year (1868) I tried again and was successful. I have already said that I got the Ireland Scholarship in 1870; I also won various prizes for Greek and Latin composition and got a first class in Moderations. I was prevented by a temporary but badly-timed illness from going in for honours in the Final Schools; Jowett, always rather hard-hearted in cases of ill-health, urged me shortly before the examination to go in for it as I was, without further preparation, assuring me that even so he thought me safe of a first class, but acting under advice I declined to do so, and I am sure I was right.

I certainly had a very agreeable and interesting set of contemporaries at Balliol, and look back with great pleasure to the friendships and acquaintanceships which I formed among them. Considering the comparatively small size of the College, a very large number distinguished themselves in after life, but I do not propose to give a list of them. Three of them attained to Cabinet rank, namely, Lansdowne, Loreburn, and Elgin; Asquith came up before I had taken my degree, but he was my junior by four years and I never knew him as an undergraduate. One who remains in my mind as an interesting and picturesque figure was Andrew Lang, who was a Scottish Exhibitioner, but quite unlike the majority of his tribe. He was brilliant in conversation, took a great interest in games (though he played them badly), and, as a writer, was already nearly, if not quite, as admirable as he was

REMINISCENCES

in later life, which is saying a good deal. I shall never forget listening to an essay of his on Rabelais, which he read to an audience of two or three at the meeting of a small Essay Club to which he and I as undergraduates belonged: it filled me with amazement, and from that moment I always anticipated for him real greatness as a writer. This he hardly attained; but he wrote an immense quantity of extremely good stuff, of which the greater part is buried in the columns of old newspapers. He was, moreover, in the true sense of the word, a poet, and some of his poems, if I am not mistaken, deserve to live. For many years he and I saw a good deal of each other in London, but he took to spending a large part of each year in Scotland, and during the last part of his life we seldom met.

It will seem strange to modern readers that there should have been, when I was at Oxford, no limit to the amount of money which might be enjoyed by any individual in the shape of scholarships or exhibitions, and that no questions were asked as to the private means of those who won such prizes by competition. The income which I derived from these sources while I was at Oxford was about £175, a sum on which it would then have been quite possible to live in Balliol College, though a good deal more was required for a comfortable life. I was told by the Warden (Thorley) of Wadham that he had known men in his college who lived on less than £80 a year.

I played cricket regularly for the College, and in my third year was Captain of the College Eleven. Football then, to my regret, was very little played at the Universities; but I used to play racquets, and

a great deal of tennis. In my last year I was favourite for the silver tennis-racquet, but was defeated by an Eton freshman, by name Ottaway, a very celebrated cricketer, who, though he did not then know the game nearly as well as I did, had a marvellous aptitude for all ball-games, and, being in better training (for I was reading rather hard at the time), managed just to beat me on the post. He afterwards, at the last moment, asked me to play with him against Cambridge; but I in ignorance had made all arrangements for going to Scotland, and the inter-University matches were not such sacrosanct affairs as they now are. So I declined, and lost for ever the chance of describing myself as "a half-blue." Apart from these sports, I even then greatly enjoyed long walks and expeditions in the beautiful country round Oxford; but it was not till after I had taken my degree that I was able, during my frequent visits to friends in the University, to explore it thoroughly and to do it justice. Riding, then as always, was an abomination to me. My father, who was extremely fond of it, took great pains, by riding lessons and otherwise, to overcome my dislike of it, but in vain; and I do not think I have ever voluntarily got upon a horse, except on rare occasions for some strictly utilitarian purpose.

During the whole of my time at Oxford it was my fixed intention, as soon as I should have got my degree, to stand for a Fellowship at All Souls. My great-grandfather and my grandfather (on my mother's side) had both been members of that Society, as had also my Uncle John Wynne; and I had several friends both among the senior and the junior Fellows. Accordingly, early in 1871 I began

REMINISCENCES

to read with a view to the All Souls examination, declining various offers of Fellowships without examination which I received from other Colleges (among them, I remember, Christ Church and New College) on the condition that I would become a resident Don. This I had no intention of doing.

I have said nothing about the way in which my vacations were spent during my four years of Oxford life. Of my reading-parties I shall speak hereafter : otherwise my time was mainly divided, like my school holidays, between my mother's house in London and the country houses of my nearest relations, Voelas, Cefnamwlch, Marlow, Rodbourne, Stokesley. Beyond that circle I had very few friends or acquaintances, always excepting the inmates of Betteshanger and Hams, whom I saw frequently ; and Walter James and Charles Adderley, both of Christ Church, were among my chief friends at Oxford outside of my own College. Adderley was a Gentleman Commoner (the species has been long since abolished), and, as such, dined at a separate table with the others of his class and with the "tufts" or "noblemen" ; I often enjoyed his hospitality, and thus made the acquaintance of (among others) my contemporary Lord Rosebery, which was the beginning of a friendship that has lasted to this day. Another contemporary, afterwards well known to fame, was Lord Randolph Churchill ; he was at Merton, but he happened to be intimate with two Balliol friends of mine, through whom I came to know him. After Oxford, however, I believe that I did not once meet him until he came to the India Office in 1885 as Secretary of State, on which occasion I, as Permanent Under-Secretary,

LORD KILBRACKEN

had to receive him. As an undergraduate he was obviously clever, and a very agreeable and amusing companion; but, judging him as he then appeared, he was one of the last individuals for whom I should have prophesied a great political career.

Among the places which I have mentioned as the homes of my relations whom I used to visit, Rodbourne, in Wiltshire, belonged to my uncle by marriage, Sir Hungerford Pollen, then a widower with eight children, from about my own age downwards. His two unmarried sisters lived with him, and my recollection of the whole family group is a particularly pleasant one: better company than my uncle or than his sister, Miss Jessie Pollen, it would not have been easy to find. Stokesley, in the north of Yorkshire, belonging to my grandfather, Mr. Wynne, was then inhabited by my old great-aunt, Miss Charlotte Hildyard. It was a rather large, well-built, and most comfortable Manor House, standing at one end of the small market-town of that name; facing, in fact, across the Market-place and down the High Street. But at the back it looked towards open fields and woods, and the landscape was glorified by the grand semicircle of the Cleveland Hills, ending with the conspicuous peak of Rosebery Toppin. The shooting and fishing, though neglected, were by nature very good, and I greatly enjoyed my visits there, being, to tell the truth, somewhat spoiled by my aunt, who attended to my wants and wishes in a more than maternal fashion. The property passed in after years to my cousin, Heneage Wynne Finch, during whose time I often stayed there up to the date of his death, in 1914. I had a great affection for the

REMINISCENCES

place, and it is a real sorrow to me that, if what I hear is true, it must now pass out of the family.

I may say here that from the age of fourteen onwards I was extremely fond of shooting, and, although we had none of our own, there was, owing to the kindness of relations and friends, no year in which I did not have as much of it as any reasonable person could wish for. This went on until I was past thirty; I then began to lose my liking for it, as well as for all other forms of sport and organized amusements; by the time I was thirty-five it had become positively irksome to me, and since the year 1884 I have never taken out a game-licence.

Besides the country houses of which I have already spoken there were two which I visited during my time at Oxford, and which I mention because I have a special pleasure in remembering them. Of these one was Urrard, near Pitlochry, then occupied by Mr. William Graham, M.P. for Glasgow; a most lovely place, with excellent grouse-shooting-attached to it. Mr. Graham's eldest son, Rutherford, was a friend of mine at Balliol, and it was through his invitation that I went there. He was a remarkable and interesting youth, good-looking, with a splendid physique, full of fun, and exceedingly quick and clever; of all the many undergraduates whom I have heard in conversation with Jowett, he was by far the most successful in amusing and interesting the great man, and in holding his own with him. He died very soon after leaving Oxford. I went twice to Urrard, and greatly enjoyed my visits, which laid the foundation of some friendships of long duration. During the second of them,

LORD KILBRACKEN

as we were driving back from a long expedition, we were met by a messenger who brought a sheaf of telegrams for Mr. Graham: they came from various business correspondents of his in widely different places, and all gave the same piece of news—the capitulation of the French Emperor and his army at Sedan.

The other visit which I remember—and I should be very ungrateful if I had forgotten it—was to Badby, in Northamptonshire. Among my Balliol friends was my contemporary, Lord Donoughmore, a very attractive, clever, and amusing young Irishman. His mother, who had known several of my Irish relations, had taken the house for the benefit of her two elder sons' hunting; her second son, Walter Hely Hutchinson, afterwards a distinguished Colonial Governor, being then at home with her. It so happened that I was kindly pressed to go there at a time when I was in small health, and living a very quiet life under doctor's orders: I went, intending to stay for a week, and ended by staying five or six weeks, being most kindly entertained and cared for by the whole family. I can never forget the debt of gratitude which I owe them.

I spent a considerable part of each of my four long vacations as a member of a reading-party. My first was at Dresden, where I stayed six weeks with half a dozen Balliol men, under the guidance of Alfred Barratt, already mentioned. It was in 1867, the year after the war which united the German States under the domination of Prussia; a change which some of them, including the Saxons, who had fought on the Austrian side in the recent war,

REMINISCENCES

accepted most unwillingly, as I can testify. We had a very good time there, making frequent short expeditions, bathing in the Elbe, going daily to the opera or the play, and listening to open-air concerts, all excellent of their kind. Wagner was then already popular in Germany, but hardly known in England, and I remember bringing back to this country the scores of some of his works, and showing them to my friends as a new discovery. My second reading-party was at Patterdale, on Ulleswater, with Adolphus Liddell, his cousin Edward Liddell, of Christ Church, and Archibald Stuart Wortley, of Merton, afterwards well known as a portrait painter. My third was a *tête-à-tête* with Theobald, already mentioned as a Rugby and Balliol friend, at Clovelly; and my last, a long one, which coincided with the early stages of the Franco-German war, at Tummel Bridge, in Perthshire. Of this the first part was spent with Albert Gray, Donoughmore, and Herbert Cope, of Balliol; they then departed, and Jowett arrived, bringing with him Rutherford Graham and one or two other pupils of his, in whose company I stayed on for another five weeks. It is interesting now to remember that we were all strong pro-Germans, except Jowett, who was equally strong on the other side. He would ask, "What has Germany done, compared to what France has done, for us and for civilization?" And to this question there was no satisfactory reply: but the fact remained that France under Napoleon III was the bully of Europe and a danger to peace, just as Germany was in 1914, and the instincts which prompted us to wish for her defeat were sound enough. Only a few days ago (I write in 1916)

LORD KILBRACKEN

I heard Lord Ormathwaite, now a very old man, tell how in the late autumn of 1870 he was dining in company with the Prince of Wales (Edward VII) and a good many others, when the conversation turned after dinner upon England's interest in the war. By this time it was evident that the Germans were victorious, and, as it happened, every man in the room was a pro-German, with the single exception of the Prince of Wales, who strongly, and even vehemently, stood up for the French. The discussion lasted until the Prince departed, and as he left the room, he said, "Well, I will tell you this: a good many of you will live to regret bitterly the events that are now happening."

I am obliged to record these reading-party experiences because they occupy a large space in my mental vision of those years, all thoroughly enjoyed, and all producing certain strong and durable effects upon my life and character. Let anyone, who does not know what a reading-party is, read Clough's *Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich*; or rather let him not read it, for, if he has never been one of a reading-party himself, he will not understand it.

Akin to reading-parties, and productive of similar effects, though of course far shorter in point of time, were my numerous voyages down the Thames from Oxford to London. I cannot help mentioning them, because they seem, when I look back, to fill a large part of my recollection of those Oxford summers, and of the five or six summers that followed them. Beginning in 1868, I accomplished this water-pilgrimage nine times, finishing generally at Wandsworth: on one or two occasions we used a row-boat, but otherwise we were always, I think, a

REMINISCENCES

crew of three men in a sailing-boat of the type then used at Oxford; they carried one large fore-and-aft sail and a centre-board. There went a certain amount of skill to the proper management of them in the narrow waters of the Thames, and there was, on a tiny scale, a real element of adventure, with here and there a very slight spice of danger, about the whole business. One never knew in the morning where one would sleep in the evening; one might, even if one condescended to towing, do less than ten miles, and on the other hand I have done, with a strong fair wind, more than thirty miles in the day; the distance of Oxford from London by river being about 100 miles, the voyage generally lasted rather less than a week. In those days the riverside inns were humble, and sometimes rough, but there was hardly ever any difficulty in getting rooms without previous notice. Nevertheless it happened not very seldom, through failure of wind or for some other reason, that one had to sleep out, either in the boat or under a hedge or a haystack in a field by the river. There was an infinite variety in one's experiences, no two voyages being in the least like each other, except in so far as they were all intensely enjoyable, and afforded endless opportunities for bathing, a form of happiness which appealed to me then and for many years afterwards, well into middle life, as strongly as it did to Clough's classical reading-party. It must be repeated that the Thames was on the whole, at that time, virtually an undiscovered country; when the British public, in the late 'seventies, began to discover it, my voyages came to an end.

A very important event in my life was the begin-

LORD KILBRACKEN

ning of my friendship with Hugh Pearson, Vicar of Sonning-on-Thames, which took place, I think, in 1869. Some Balliol men, among them my friend Kenneth Muir Mackenzie, lately (1915) created a peer for his long and distinguished public services, had been reading at Sonning, and had made his acquaintance. My name happened to be mentioned; he had been at Harrow with my father, and had a great respect and admiration for him: he sent me a message that he would like me to go and stay with him. This I did, and the consequence was a friendship which greatly influenced my subsequent life and character. He was a very remarkable man, though already, only some thirty-five years after his death, there can be few to whom he is anything more than a name. He was son of a Dean of Salisbury, and at an early age had become Vicar of Sonning, a charming village in one of the prettiest bits of Thames scenery. Here he soon took root, and thenceforward, though offers of preferment were many, nothing could tempt him to leave his delightful home, and his parishioners, who were devoted to him. It was only a few years before his death that he accepted a canonry of Windsor, pressed upon him by Queen Victoria; this he did rather unwillingly, though it involved nothing more than a short absence from Sonning every year when it was his turn to be "in residence."¹ He was a bachelor with good private means, and when I first

¹ It is certainly true that he had the offer of the Deanery of Westminster, but refused it. The Queen, who was very fond of him, and greatly enjoyed his society, was anxious to have him there as the successor of his great friend and hers, Dean Stanley.

REMINISCENCES

knew him had long since made Sonning a model parish, with a carefully and judiciously restored church, excellent schools, a perfect vicarage containing a first-rate library, and everything handsome about it. He was certainly one of the most charming companions that I have ever known, with an extraordinarily wide knowledge of men and things, an equally wide acquaintance with literature, a passionate love of music and of church architecture, a delightful sense of humour, and a genius for friendship. He knew half the distinguished men of the day, but was intimate, and wished to be intimate, with very few, of whom perhaps Arthur Stanley, Dean of Westminster, Jowett, and Lord Chief Justice Coleridge stood first. He was a thoroughly good and loyal Churchman, but perfectly open to all modern ideas, and not in the least afraid of them. The ritual of his church, inclining as it did to the "high" form of worship, was always admirably performed, and his sermons, delivered with the advantage of a most beautiful voice, were among the best that I have ever listened to. It interested and amused him to reckon among his friends a few young men, of such an age that they might have been his sons, and as one of these I was fortunate enough to be adopted. During ten or twelve years I used often to stay with him, generally from Saturday to Monday; and, as he hardly ever had more than one guest at a time, one's visits were nearly always *tête-à-tête*. After I married he came, through me, to know Sir Walter and Lady James, and, though he rarely paid visits, stayed once or twice with them at Betteshanger. I like to remember that he christened my two eldest children—a func-

LORD KILBRACKEN

tion which he particularly loved to perform for the benefit of his friends.

What the intimate friendship of such a man was to me may be more easily imagined than expressed in words; I doubt whether any man ever made a deeper impression on me for good. It was, I think, entirely owing to his precept and example that I began to take that interest in church architecture which has ever since been not only one of my greatest pleasures in life, but something much more than a pleasure; and this is only one of the many debts that I owe him. I have mentioned the names of three of his dearest friends, but of these the greatest and dearest was undoubtedly Dean Stanley, with whom for many years he used annually to travel abroad. Stanley died in the summer of 1881, and after his death "H. P."—he was always affectionately spoken of by his initials—was a stricken man. In the spring of 1882 he died, and the crowd of friends who attended his funeral in Sonning churchyard was one of the most remarkable and distinguished assemblies of which I have ever formed a humble unit.

There was another somewhat similar friendship which I enjoyed between the years 1871 and 1889, and to which I owe certainly much, and probably more than I am aware of. Sir Frederic Rogers was about three years older than my father; we came to know him through his wife, who was a very old friend of my mother's. After a brilliant career at Eton and Oxford, he had become a Fellow of Oriel in the days when that was the highest distinction to which an Oxford man could attain. He was called to the Bar, but was soon attracted into legal work

REMINISCENCES

of an official kind, and finally became Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies in 1860. Here his very remarkable abilities gave him great influence, and it is said that some Colonial Prime Minister, returning after a visit to England, reported, as the result of his observations in this country, the discovery that our Colonial Empire was "governed by a person called Rogers." In 1851 he had inherited a baronetcy and a beautiful place, Blachford, in Devonshire; but he never made his home there until after his retirement from office in 1871, when he became a peer with the title of Lord Blachford. He kept on his house in London for some time after quitting office, and, after he had given it up, he was often in town, usually staying with his great friend, Dean Church, at St. Paul's, or with my mother in Gloucester Place; once or twice he was our guest in Portman Street. I paid him occasional visits at Blachford, and thus in one way or another saw him pretty often during those eighteen years. He was, I suppose, one of the ablest and most valuable public servants of his time: when he retired, he probably had no equal. But it is as an ideal representative of Oxford in the 'thirties—Oxford in the days of the great "Movement" of which his College was the centre—that I remember him. It is enough to say that, next to Dean Church, John Henry Newman was perhaps his greatest friend, and that he had been intimate with Keble and all the greater lights of that stirring time. He was a man of extraordinary intellectual power, possessing an immense knowledge of a great variety of subjects; a delightful companion, and, with all this, modest and humble to a fault. Of no one with whom I have been inti-

LORD KILBRACKEN

mate could it be more truly said that "to know him was a liberal education," and there are very few whom I remember with greater admiration, affection, or gratitude for benefits received.¹

My narrative has now brought me to the age of twenty-four. I am quite conscious that I have written a disproportionately large number of pages about those early years; but, granted that I was to set down the things which, however trivial and unimportant in themselves, stand out in my memory and seem to have left permanent effects on me, I do not think that many of those which I have mentioned could have been left out. I believe that many boys, when they approach manhood, have to be forced, reluctant, into such society as happens to be open to them; but I was certainly more reluctant than most of them, and was better able to resist the pressure applied to me by my mother and others. I am far from implying that I am at all proud of this; I simply record the fact. At the age of twenty-four I had never been at a ball; and I doubt whether I had dined out in London so much as a dozen times, unless it were with some near relation or with one of the two or three families with whom I was on intimate terms. And even this amount of social intercourse was achieved only under coercion constantly applied by my elders.

¹ Cardinal Newman, a few days before his death, dictated a message in which he said that "of all his friends Lord Blachford was the most gifted, the most talented, and of the most wonderful grasp of mind"; and that "of all the intimacies which he had formed in his Oxford life, none had approached his intimacy with Lord Blachford." See *Letters of Lord Blachford*, Murray, 1896, p. 144.

REMINISCENCES

It was always understood that I was, like my father before me, to become a barrister, and with that object in view I had begun eating dinners at Lincoln's Inn some time before I took my degree. My intention was to begin reading in chambers as soon as the All Souls Fellowship examination should be over; this would be in November, 1871. But an unexpected event put an end to my candidature. In August of that year I became engaged, and on September 26th I was married at Betteshanger to the only daughter of my father's old friend, Sir Walter James; an event which has been the cause, direct or indirect, of most of the happiness that has since then come my way.

CHAPTER IV

After our wedding my wife and I spent a few weeks at Cefnamwlch, lent to us by my uncle, Charles Wynne Finch; we then made a short stay in Ireland, and on our way back paid our first visit to Hawarden. Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone were intimate friends of my wife's parents, and Mr. Gladstone had been, as I have already said, a friend of my father's. I had myself just shaken hands with the great man and his wife, and knew two of his daughters, whom I had met at Betteshanger; otherwise I had till then no acquaintance with the family. Our arrival was a memorable one, and is amusing to look back to. Mrs. Gladstone had written, telling us to come, not by express to Chester, but by slow train to the small station at Queensferry, so that she might send the carriage to meet us. In order to do this we found that we had to sleep at Holyhead and proceed, in bitter cold weather, by a train which took the greater part of the day to reach our destination; but we thought it best to obey, and were accordingly deposited at Queensferry (never a very cheerful spot) about 4.30 p.m. in pitch darkness, for the shortest day was now at hand, and in a snow-storm. Of the carriage there was no sign, nor was any living creature visible anywhere except the solitary station-master, who kindly undertook to do his best for us. After half an hour or more he pro-

REMINISCENCES

duced an open vehicle of the truck species, very much like a costermonger's cart, and intended for the conveyance of goods of some kind ; certainly not for passengers. On this, somehow, my wife, her maid, and our luggage were packed, and we started out into the blizzard, the driver walking on one side and I on the other. My wife, I believe, remembers the occasion with interest as the first on which she ever saw me really angry. We pursued our way at a very slow foot's-pace for two and a half miles, mostly up hill, and finally reached the Castle in safety. Here the warmth of our welcome, the profuse apologies and explanations of Mrs. Gladstone, and the humour of the situation very speedily dispelled any unworthy sentiments that I might have been harbouring, and we felt ourselves at home from the first. At that time Sir Stephen Glynne was still alive, and he and his sister Mrs. Gladstone acted as host and hostess of the Castle ; I can even now see him, as he stood in front of the fire, from time to time repeating, whenever there was a lull in Mrs. Gladstone's lamentations :—"I am only anxious that it should be understood that *I* had nothing to do with it."

This visit, the first, as it turned out, of a long series, was to me a most agreeable one ; but so far as I remember I did not have much intercourse with Mr. Gladstone. I had enough, however, to bring me under his spell and to establish one fact which, in view of my subsequent relations with him, was for me all-important ; the fact, namely, that, then as ever afterwards, I was quite at my ease with him and not in the least afraid of him. This was quite contrary to what might have been expected, and to

what I myself, as a matter of fact, did expect: for Mr. Gladstone, then in the third year of his first Prime Ministership, was not only a great man but also, in spite of his extreme kindness and courtesy, a formidable one; ¹ while I, on the other hand, was very young, completely unused to society in the ordinary sense of the word, and by no means free from shyness and nervousness. There were, indeed, at that time several among my elders in whose company I was never thoroughly comfortable, but Mr. Gladstone from the first produced on me an exactly opposite effect. Whatever the cause may have been, such was the fact; and this it was that made my intimate relations with him, which lasted through twenty-seven years, so uniformly delightful to me, and enabled me, as his Private Secretary, to be of some real use to him. For at times he could be rather terrible, and those who on such occasions were not overawed, but were able and willing to stand up to him, were those who served him best, and they invariably had their reward.

Among the occasions on which Mr. Gladstone was, as I have said, rather terrible, must be reckoned those on which one had to confess that one differed from him upon some subject on which he felt strongly; and the subjects on which he felt strongly were very numerous. The fact is, I believe, that political questions generally presented

¹ There was a story of a shy young man, who suddenly found himself alone with Mr. Gladstone and ventured to break the silence by remarking that "London was very full." Mr. Gladstone fixed him with his glittering eye, and in his resonant voice and with the intent air of one who seeks for important information, asked at once: "In what sense do you mean 'full'?" The story ends there.

REMINISCENCES

themselves to his mind as ethical questions of right and wrong, and that he found it at the first blush very difficult to realize that an opinion, contrary to his own, could be held without some slight tinge of moral obliquity. I myself had to face this ordeal more than once, and on one occasion I did so with most unexpected results. I was walking with him at Hawarden, when the conversation took such a turn that I was obliged to say boldly that, if I had been in the House of Commons, I could not have voted for his recent Home Rule Bill; and I gave as one of my reasons the fact that it allowed to the Irish Members a share in the management of English and Scottish affairs, while depriving the English and Scottish Members of any corresponding control over the affairs of Ireland. I expected an outburst, but to my great surprise he took it quite calmly and quietly, expressing regret, but neither arguing nor even hinting that I was wrong. This was so unlike him that I thought then, rightly or wrongly, that he himself, in his inner consciousness, regarded this as a very weak point in the Bill.

In the summer of 1872 my wife and I made a short tour in Devon and Cornwall, visiting among others my quondam schoolmaster, Dr. Temple, then Bishop of Exeter. On our return we stayed with my father-in-law in his house in Whitehall Gardens, which is now (1916) the Office of the Minister of Munitions; and here, one day in July, I read in the paper a paragraph announcing the retirement from office of "Sir Alexander Duff Gordon, Bart."; the name attracted my attention because of a book of travels by Lady Duff Gordon which I had read with pleasure, but I had no idea

LORD KILBRACKEN

that the event thus chronicled was decisive of my future career. But so it was.

At this time Mr. Gladstone's principal Private Secretary was Algernon West, a man of long experience in the Civil Service, who had served various other ministers in a similar capacity, and had special gifts for that kind of work. Of his subsequent career I shall have to speak hereafter. He was married and had children, and occupied a set of rooms in the First Lord of the Treasury's official house, No. 10, Downing Street, as Mr. Gladstone himself preferred at this epoch to live in his own house, 11, Carlton House Terrace, and liked to have one secretary resident in Downing Street to deal promptly with any business that might come in at night or at odd times during the day. Duff Gordon was until his resignation a Commissioner of Inland Revenue, and it was soon publicly announced that West was to succeed him, thus creating a vacancy for a Private Secretary. It was at once suggested by some of my friends that I might have a chance of succeeding to a junior post on Mr. Gladstone's staff; the idea certainly did not originate with me, for I should never have supposed at that time that I could possibly be in the running for such an enviable appointment. My father-in-law, however, thought otherwise, and wrote a letter to Mr. Gladstone, which he showed me before he despatched it. He was, as I have said, on intimate terms with the great man, and his letter was certainly not more than three or four lines in length: it merely mentioned my name, with a word of commendation, and asked him to consider it.

This, to the best of my knowledge and belief, is

REMINISCENCES

the only letter that was ever written by anybody recommending me for a post with a view to my own advantage.

Mr. Gladstone sent a very kind but non-committal reply. A few days later, however, I was informed that the arrangement which he intended to make was as follows: Lord Frederick Cavendish, Mrs. Gladstone's nephew by marriage, was to be Principal Private Secretary; he was a Member of Parliament and was to be unpaid. William Brampton Gurdon, who had held the second place hitherto under West, was to have an increase of salary and to be the head man for all official, as distinguished from Parliamentary, work. The post of Assistant Private Secretary, or "third man," was at my disposal; I should receive £200 a year and should be required to live in the rooms vacated by West, as Gurdon, being a bachelor, preferred to live at home with his parents.

I need hardly say that I had no hesitation about accepting this offer. The popularity of Mr. Gladstone's Government was waning, and it was of course probable that, whenever it fell, I should find myself on the pavement. But, if this should happen, my experiences in the interval could not fail to be of very great advantage to me, and it would not be too late for me to resume the study of law, which I had kept up intermittently for more than a year, and to begin the work in chambers which my marriage had caused me to postpone for a few months. I must add that although it had been taken as a matter of course that I should be called to the Bar, I always had secret doubts whether I was really well-fitted for the profession, or should be likely to

LORD KILBRACKEN

take it as the serious business of life. Accordingly, on the 10th of August, 1872, two important events took place: my eldest child was born, and I entered upon my office as Assistant Private Secretary to the First Lord of the Treasury.

It may be worth while to mention the fact that my political opinions, such as they were, did not stand in my way. All the influences to which I had been exposed at home were strongly Conservative, and I was a Conservative accordingly up to my third or fourth year at Oxford. Other forces then came into play; Jowett was of course a Liberal; my uncle Charles Wynne Finch, who had been Conservative Member for the Caernarvon boroughs, had now joined the other side; my uncle Denis Godley was a strong Liberal; my father-in-law was a moderate one, and perhaps I had to some extent begun to think for myself. The result was that I had no difficulty in joining the ranks of Mr. Gladstone's adherents, or in working heartily for him and his party. It will be borne in mind that the Liberal doctrines of that time, with their violent anti-socialist spirit and their strong insistence on the gospel of thrift, self-help, settlement of wages by the higgling of the market, and non-interference by the State, were not very different from those generally held by the Conservatives of the present day. I think that Mr. Gladstone was the strongest anti-socialist that I have ever known among persons who gave any serious thought to social and political questions. It is quite true, as has been often said, that "we are all socialists up to a certain point"; but Mr. Gladstone fixed that point lower, and was more vehement against those who went above it,

REMINISCENCES

than any other politician or official of my acquaintance. I remember his speaking indignantly to me of the budget of 1874 as "That socialistic budget of Northcote's," merely because of the special relief which it gave to the poorer class of income-tax payers. His strong belief in Free Trade was only one of the results of his deep-rooted conviction that the Government's interference with the free action of the individual, whether by taxation or otherwise, should be kept at an irreducible minimum. It is, indeed, not too much to say that his conception of Liberalism was the negation of Socialism.

Lord Frederick Cavendish had married a daughter of my father's great friend Lord Lyttelton; I cannot remember whether I knew him at all before he and I joined Mr. Gladstone's staff, but in one way or another I saw much of him thenceforward until his death in 1882, and the more I saw of him the more I loved him—I can use no weaker word. He was only a moderately good speaker, whether in the House of Commons or on the platform, but in all the other qualifications of a statesman he was first-rate. He might be described as having possessed all the best characteristics of Lord Hartington, his intellect, his public spirit, his industry, his pre-eminent and conspicuous honesty and straightforwardness, together with a friendliness, gentleness, and attractiveness of manner in which his elder brother was somewhat deficient. As an official he was in the first class, and I know—I have seen it in Mr. Gladstone's handwriting—that he looked to Frederick Cavendish as a possible successor to himself in the leadership of the House of Commons, in case Lord Hartington should in the

LORD KILBRACKEN

meantime have succeeded to his father's place in the House of Lords. But this was not to be. He had not an enemy in the world, but by sheer ill-luck he chanced to walk home one evening in Dublin with a man whom the Fenians had determined to murder; and, as he courageously tried to defend his companion, he necessarily shared his fate.

When he became Private Secretary to Mr. Gladstone in 1872, it was soon apparent that, having of course in the recess numerous engagements away from London, he counted for little or nothing except during the session, and that Gurdon and I should have the work pretty much to ourselves, with the assistance of Mrs. Gladstone's nephew, Spencer Lyttelton, who was attached to the staff in an undefined position, unpaid, and occupied chiefly with more or less mechanical duties.

I consider myself very fortunate in having had Gurdon as my tutor in those early days. He was not, perhaps, in the first class for all-round ability, but he was an excellent official, had been well drilled in the Treasury, was an enthusiastic admirer of his chief, and had adopted whole-heartedly the high standard of work and of disinterested devotion to the public interests which Mr. Gladstone had done more than any other one man to introduce into the service. He had been at Eton and Cambridge, and was the son of a well-known Norfolk squire; his eldest brother was, or soon became, Member for one of the divisions of the county, and was afterwards created Lord Cranworth. It must be admitted that tact was not his strong point; his opinions on most subjects were very decided, not to say vehement, and he brought them out without

REMINISCENCES

very much regard to the feelings of his hearers, thus earning in the Treasury the nickname of "*hostis humani generis*"; he was generally called "*Hostis*" for short. But he was essentially a good fellow, generous and kind-hearted, and his reckless speeches brought him little or no enmity, but much chaff and ridicule. We became great friends, and for many years saw much of each other; but rather late in life he married a very clever and charming wife, who soon died and left him inconsolable. Thenceforward he withdrew from all social relationships, though he remained in public life; having previously resigned his place in the Treasury, he became Member for a division of Suffolk, and did good work in Parliament until his death. Under him I speedily learnt the routine of the work, and from him as well as from Mr. Gladstone I imbibed principles and maxims which stood me in good stead throughout the whole of my career in the public service.

Mr. Gladstone left London a day or two after I had been appointed to his staff; and it was, I think, early in November, when I had been for about three months at work, that Gurdon, wishing to help to shoot his father's pheasants, took, with Mr. Gladstone's permission, a fortnight's holiday, leaving me in sole charge. How he could venture to propose it, or Mr. Gladstone to allow it, seems to me now incomprehensible; but of course the work during the recess was nothing like what it was during the session; and the volume of business and of the consequent responsibility was certainly in 1872 much less than what it was when I became Mr. Gladstone's Private Secretary for the second time in 1880,

LORD KILBRACKEN

and, I suppose, less than a half of what it is to-day.

Mr. Gladstone used invariably to spend his holidays as far as possible at Hawarden: he never came to town unless absolutely obliged to do so, and the business of his office was conducted by means of large pouches. One or two of these went to him by post every day, including Sunday, and came duly back by return of post. He was, as is generally known, a supremely good official; certainly the best that I have ever had to do with, which is saying a good deal. He had thought out numerous methods of saving time and trouble in office work, insisted on their strict observance, and observed them strictly himself. This was part and parcel of his passion for economy in all the departments of life; economy of money, no doubt, but economy of time and of everything else as well. I cannot remember that I ever saw him for a minute unoccupied; but it would be a great mistake to suppose that he never allowed himself time for thinking. On the contrary, this was systematically provided for, and was done mainly out of doors, as he walked, or at times when his hands and eyes, but not his mind, were necessarily employed, as for instance when he was dressing himself. I have seen him sit still and silent to think out some specific matter, but this was rare. As a rule he was fidgeted and uneasy, and his fingers worked nervously, if by chance there was an interval of ten seconds in the supply of papers or whatever one might be putting before him.

He had laid down rules for our treatment of his letters as follows:—they all passed, before reaching him, through our hands, and certain specified

REMINISCENCES

handwritings, such as those, for instance, of near relations, or of his colleagues in the Cabinet, were respected by us, as were also envelopes which bore certain marks or signals (but these were very few). Otherwise we opened everything that came addressed to him, folded the letter in a prescribed shape, and wrote on the outside of it—using a cover or “skin” of paper if no sufficient space was left on the letter itself—the date, the name of the writer, and a short *précis* of the contents; adding sometimes a mark which showed that in our opinion he ought to read the letter himself and not to be content with our *précis*. This advice he invariably followed; but in the absence of that mark I believe he read very few indeed of the letters that were addressed to him, trusting entirely to our account of their contents. He would then write, immediately below our *précis*, a short minute instructing us as to the nature of the reply to be sent; but occasionally, of course, he answered a letter with his own hand, or else adopted a course peculiar, I believe, to himself. He would write on the letter itself, or on its “skin,” the usual instructions for a reply, and would return to us, with the letter, a sheet of note-paper on which he had written what he called “a head and tail”—that is to say, a beginning, “My dear Sir” (or whatever it might be), and an ending, “Yours faithfully, W. E. Gladstone”; between these two fragments he would leave a blank space, sometimes of two or three pages, which he calculated would be enough for what he had instructed us to say, and we had to fit it in accordingly; not always an easy job. A more signal proof of confidence in his secretaries he could hardly have given.

LORD KILBRACKEN

When he was in town, the principal secretary used to go up to him after breakfast with a basketful of letters, treated as aforesaid, and of such other documents as, if he had been at Hawarden, would have been sent to him in the pouch; and he would get through them with incredible speed, but without the smallest trace of carelessness or undue haste. The documents which were put before him in this way were those which had some sort of interest or value, however slight, whether personal or political. As for the great mass of his correspondence—ninetenths of it, I suppose—which came under neither of these heads, it was allowed to accumulate, and was dealt with usually once a week. Like the more important stuff, every letter of this class was docketed, but of course very briefly, with date, name, and *précis* of contents; the collection was then divided into bundles according to the probable reply. Thus, there would be one bundle labelled “thank”; another, “acknowledge receipt”; another, “regret inability to meet his wishes”; another, “nil” (no reply); and so on. Mr. Gladstone would go through the bundles, thus prepared, at top speed, but never omitting to read every individual docket, and sometimes (but seldom) taking a letter out of the bundle and examining it. He would then just initial our suggested reply, which covered the answers to a whole bundle: and in this way I have known him get through the accumulated “rubbish,” as he called it, of a week or ten days—I suppose at least some 200 or 250 letters—in a quarter of an hour. The rule was that we were not to deal with any letter, however trivial or insane, unless it had thus come under his eye; but

REMINISCENCES

in practice this law could not be quite strictly observed.

I have described at some length these methods of dealing with correspondence, as they were characteristic of Mr. Gladstone; but this was of course only a small part, though an important one, of our everyday work. There was a great deal of "interviewing" to be done, which I found at first a difficult and uncongenial task, but I soon got into the way of it. Another weak point of mine was my comparative ignorance of "who's who," the natural result of the life which I had led up to that time; and this for a Private Secretary is a rather serious matter. There was a story, well known at the time, of one of Mr. Disraeli's Private Secretaries (I will not mention his name) who, having to deal with a long letter on the subject of the Byron memorial, signed by "Anne Blunt" and addressed to the Prime Minister, failed to recognize under that name Lord Byron's grand-daughter, Lady Anne Blunt, and sent in Mr. Disraeli's name a very curt reply to "Mrs. Blunt": for which error he was sharply reproved by his Chief, who said, "You should study your Peerage as you would your Bible." In the early days of my Private Secretaryship I am afraid I should have been quite capable of a mistake of this kind: but in that position it is impossible to remain ignorant about names, titles, and personages for any length of time, and I cannot remember that I was guilty of any serious blunder.

In this month, October, my wife and I, not having yet moved into our rooms in Downing Street, were house-keeping after a rather makeshift fashion in part of my father-in-law's house in Whitehall

LORD KILBRACKEN

Gardens. One morning my wife received a letter from Mrs. Gladstone, proposing that her husband, who was coming up to town on business, should dine with us on that same evening. He came accordingly. We had no other guest; the evening passed most pleasantly, and this little entertainment set the seal on my intimate relations with the great man, which lasted until his death; from this moment onwards I felt completely at home with him. But, as I have said, he could sometimes be rather alarming. I remember that, very shortly after this, I happened to be wishing to ask his leave to go away for a day or two, and it was not always easy for me, as I was not then his principal Private Secretary, to get hold of him for this purpose. I chanced, however, to meet him at the top of the staircase in Downing Street, and he ordered me to do something for him—I forget what it was, but it was no doubt rather urgent and important. I acknowledged his command, and was proceeding to make my petition, which would have been a matter of less than five seconds; but he instantly cut me short, saying in a stern voice and with one of his well-known awe-inspiring glances, "Do it at once, please." Luckily I already knew him well enough to be aware that he was not really angry, but merely in a hurry, and, as usual, completely absorbed by, and concentrated upon, the subject that was occupying his mind.

The Downing Street rooms, in which we were, as it turned out, to pass nearly a year and a half, were a curious experience. The principal rooms in the Prime Minister's official residence were used as offices for himself and his staff, and we were, so to

REMINISCENCES

speak, encamped in the remaining portion of the building. Luckily we had a comfortable drawing-room and dining-room, not too large; and the bedrooms, though cold in winter, were very tolerable in summer: one of them, an enormous room, is now (1916) used by the Asquith family as a dining-room. The Cabinet room adjoined our drawing-room, separated from it only by double folding doors, and we could hear the conversation and frequent loud laughter of Her Majesty's Ministers, though we could never distinguish the words. My wife's friends, if they happened to call upon her during Cabinet meetings (then held almost always in the afternoon), were generally much amused and interested by this running accompaniment to their own conversation, as well as by the ritual which they witnessed if they chanced to be there at tea-time; for my wife used always, on such occasions, to send in a large cup of tea, with bread-and-butter, to Mr. Gladstone, which he used to consume in the presence of his envious colleagues, some of whom complained to us about the practice. We should have been very happy to send in fifteen cups of tea, that being, if I remember right, the number of the Cabinet; but we were not encouraged to do so.

It so happened that, when we began to keep house in Downing Street, the price of coal was, for that time, abnormally high; for our first order we paid 34s., and in the following winter the price was 42s. per ton. The kitchen range was what it had been in Mr. Pitt's time, and consumed an amount of fuel which seemed to approach the requirements of a fair-sized steamship. I decided that it must be replaced by a new, smaller, and more economical

range, even if I had to pay for it myself; but first, I thought, I would try the Office of Works, who were responsible for the care and maintenance of the building. The Chief Commissioner of Works was at this time a man called Ayrton, renowned alike for his extreme parsimony of the public money and for his brutal rudeness; so much so that all my friends laughed at me for making the attempt, and foretold a crushing refusal. To their amazement and mine, a beautiful up-to-date new range was put in within a week of the receipt of my application. It was not till three or four years afterwards, when I had long ceased to live in Downing Street, that the mystery was cleared up. Ayrton, it appeared, had been under the quite erroneous impression that the State supplied me with coal gratis, and that it was, therefore, the public purse, and not mine, that was suffering by the waste of fuel to which I had drawn his attention. Not long after I had heard this explanation of his unexpected action, I told the story at Hawarden to Mr. Gladstone and others; it amused everyone except Mr. Gladstone, who very characteristically could see no fun in it at all, and was only vexed that the State should have been put to the unnecessary expense of a new range in consequence of Ayrton's mistake.

My work naturally brought me into close contact with the Treasury officials, of whom the chief was at that time Sir Ralph Lingen, the Permanent Secretary, who on his retirement a few years later became Lord Lingen. He had been a distinguished scholar at Oxford, a Fellow of Balliol, and for a short time after taking his Degree, a Master at Rugby. He was very gracious and indulgent to me,

REMINISCENCES

a beginner, and he and his wife were soon added to the number of our friends. But of all the new friendships that I acquired during this term of office, by far the most important was that of Reginald Earle Welby, who was at that time Principal Clerk in the Financial Department. His reputation was already great; he had for some years been the most important force behind the scenes in the management of the finances of the country, and so remained until, having succeeded Lingen in 1885, he retired from the Permanent Secretaryship in 1894. He had his defects as an official; he was inclined to be an indiscriminating and over-parsimonious opponent of all public expenditure, wise or unwise, and he had not the faculty of "delegation," that is to say, of utilizing fully the services of his subordinates. Consequently his delays were proverbial; his table was piled with masses of papers awaiting his attention, and, to make matters worse, he had an inveterate habit of digression in conversation, which made an official interview with him twice as long as it need have been; unless, indeed, it was one of first-class importance, in which case he never wasted a word. But these were only spots in the sun. He was certainly one of the greatest Civil servants of the nineteenth century, and no one in that line of public service has better earned his Peerage. His insight into abstruse financial questions, his wide knowledge of financial facts, his grip of sound principles and his power of applying them, were such as I have seldom seen surpassed. He and Mr. Gladstone delighted in each other, and thoroughly enjoyed the financial discussions which they frequently had together whenever Mr. Gladstone was

LORD KILBRACKEN

in office ; I may add that, if one had the luck to be present, it was a treat to listen to them. In age he was (on paper) my senior by fifteen years ; but his activity, both mental and bodily, his constant good spirits, his love of fun, and his keen interest in innumerable matters great and small, were those of a young man, and seemed hardly to diminish till he was about eighty years of age. After that a change was perceptible, but until within three weeks of his death, at the age of eighty-three, he retained all these characteristics very slightly impaired ; and I received from him, about a month before his last short illness, an amusing conversational letter of eight closely-written pages, which in respect of handwriting and contents might equally well have been written by him at the age of forty or fifty. He was a most loyal and affectionate friend, and for forty-three years, to my great delight and advantage, we saw much of each other. Like most men of strong affections, he was a good hater, and it was curious to see the cloud that would suddenly overspread his face, and the change in his voice and manner, whenever one of a certain well-defined group of names was mentioned in his presence. At Eton and Cambridge he had taken matters easily, but he was a fairly good classical scholar, and a great reader, with a considerable knowledge of some branches of literature. He never married, but seemed to enjoy thoroughly the life of a well-to-do, hospitable, and generous old bachelor, with a large troop of friends. Writing, as I do, shortly after his death, I am conscious that there are few outside of my own family whose loss could have made a greater difference in my life.

CHAPTER V

Mr. Gladstone's Government, when I first became one of his Private Secretaries, had lost most of its popularity, and, as time went on, things did not improve, though it still had a large majority in the House of Commons. With all his magnificent gifts, Mr. Gladstone was not a good party leader, mainly because he was so utterly unlike the colleagues with whom he had to work, and the supporters in Parliament on whom he had to rely. He was a creature of a different species, and most of those about him, though they might come for a time under the spell of his splendid eloquence and enthusiasm, did not really in the least understand him, or he them. But this radical difference of nature did not by any means save him from the common mistake of "imputing himself," that is to say, of assuming unconsciously that other men were impelled by the same motives and guided by the same influences and beliefs as himself; on the contrary, he was exceptionally prone to this form of error, and, the facts being what they were, this was the cause of many of his misfortunes and disappointments. Not only were his defects in his way, but his very virtues, and his uncompromising adherence to what he thought right, were often, from the point of view of party politicians, serious obstacles to success. He was accused of being able, on such occasions, to per-

suade himself that the expedient course was also the right one; and the charge, though generally unjust, was not wholly without foundation. Of course every party-politician is, as a matter of fact, obliged to do this pretty frequently. The difference between Mr. Gladstone and other people was that he did it not more often, but less contentedly, less quietly and secretly, and with more difficulty and visible effort. He did sometimes, but not often, unconsciously seek and find an excuse for doing that which his unaided conscience might have condemned: but, when he did so, the excuse was hardly ever the one which a plain man would have found, but something preternaturally ingenious and subtle which commended itself to no one but himself. For attacking somebody else's Government, for compelling his followers in a rush of enthusiasm to rally for the attack under his banner, he was unequalled; but for keeping his party together, when the assault had succeeded and their emotions had cooled down, he was by no means so well qualified.

During the autumn of 1872 he was mainly occupied with the subject of Irish Education, and his Bill dealing with this question was introduced at the beginning of the session of 1873. It was defeated on the second reading by a combination of Conservatives, Irishmen, and discontented Liberals, and Mr. Gladstone at once resigned; but Mr. Disraeli either could not or would not form a Government, and Mr. Gladstone's ministry was obliged, with diminished prestige, to remain in office. In the following autumn a reconstruction of the Government took place, Mr. Gladstone taking the office of Chan-

REMINISCENCES

cellor of the Exchequer in addition to that of First Lord of the Treasury. At this time he had a very shaky seat at Greenwich, and the Law Officers, if I remember right, advised that he need not vacate it and seek re-election on adding the Chancellorship to his previous office. The legal point, however, was a doubtful one; it was at once warmly taken up by the Opposition and by the newspapers, and it was evident that when Parliament met there would be a full-dress debate on this subject, with consequences which might be very disagreeable. There is no doubt but that this anticipation had the effect of making him very unwilling to meet Parliament while the matter was in suspense. On the other hand he, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, having a large surplus to dispose of, had been working at a plan for abolishing the income-tax which, he thought, could not fail to be extremely popular if it was placed before the public; and the result of these two combined causes was that he induced his Cabinet, at very short notice, to join him in advising a sudden and unexpected dissolution of Parliament in February, 1874. He was, however, completely defeated in the General Election which followed, and Disraeli took office and retained it for the next six years.

My first term of office thus came to an end; but for some such ending at an early date I was fully prepared, and the advantages which I had gained from this experience of eighteen months could hardly be overrated. I had learnt much which was of incalculable value to me; I had made many friends, official and non-official, and I think I may say that not only Mr. Gladstone but others, too, in

LORD KILBRACKEN

high places had taken note of my existence. In fact, from this moment my future career, such as it has been, was more or less assured.

I determined to be called to the Bar without delay, and accordingly read for a year in the chambers of E. S. Ford, who had a very good chancery business as a junior. He was a Rugbeian, and brother-in-law to the great Tom Hughes, the author of *Tom Brown*. For some years after I left him he continued to prosper at the Bar, but he never took silk, and while still in middle life retired to a property which he had inherited in Cornwall, where I believe he still lives. He was a very pleasant fellow and a very good lawyer, and I learnt from him much that was most useful to me afterwards, though I must confess that I did not work very hard, well knowing by this time that I should never hold a brief. I also learnt a good deal by attending the various Equity Courts, where Cairns and Jessel were then in all their glory, and by listening to the arguments and judgments; and this was for me altogether a very profitable time. I have often thought that the work of a highly-placed Civil Servant has much in common with that of an Equity Judge, and my training as a draftsman in Ford's chambers was certainly most helpful to me when I came to deal with drafting of another kind in the India Office.

At this epoch, nothing was needed for a call to the Bar except the eating of a certain number of dinners at an Inn of Court (mine was Lincoln's Inn) and a certificate from a barrister that one had read for a year in his chambers; and on the strength of these two qualifications I became a barrister at the

REMINISCENCES

beginning of the year 1876. But before this happened I was again engaged in political work.

It was in 1875 that Mr. Gladstone formally resigned the Leadership of the Liberal Party. Improbable as it may seem in view of what subsequently happened, I am quite sure that, at the time, he fully believed that he would never hold office again. In the House of Commons there still existed at that time a type for which I have often heard Mr. Gladstone express the strongest admiration; its representatives were men of long Parliamentary experience and high character, who had great influence in the House and spoke with weight upon important occasions, but steadily refused office. This, beyond any doubt, was the rôle which Mr. Gladstone proposed thenceforward to play; and I suppose he was himself the only person in official circles who was not aware that his intention could not by any possibility be realized. But at the time there was nothing for it but to accept his resignation and to find a successor. Lord Granville accordingly became leader of the party, while Lord Hartington was to lead it in the House of Commons.

I do not remember what the process was by which Lord Granville was placed in this position, and I believe that it is sometimes questioned whether he, rather than Lord Hartington, was the leader. All that I can say about it is that he certainly used in private to speak of himself as the leader, adding generally some modest words about Hartington's more conspicuous and more laborious duties, and that the meetings of ex-Cabinet Ministers were summoned by him and almost always held in his house. He had been distinctly the

second man in the late Government; Mr. Gladstone had most complete confidence in him, consulted him very frequently, and was generally guided by his advice; which was fortunate, for in the points in which Mr. Gladstone was weak, Lord Granville was strong. I had seen a good deal of him, both officially, and because, being Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, he spent a large part of the year at Walmer Castle, about five miles from my father-in-law's house at Betteshanger. On becoming leader of the party, he thought he would require a Private Secretary, and offered me the post. After consideration, I accepted, making the condition, to which Lord Granville rather reluctantly agreed, that I should be unpaid.

Within a few months after leaving Downing Street, we had acquired the lease of a house, No. 12, Portman Street, which was to be our home for the next fifteen years. It was arranged that, when Lord Granville was in town for the Session, I should attend four or five times a week at his house in Carlton House Terrace; and that when he was at Walmer I should go there occasionally as required, which I could the more easily do as we used at that time to spend some months every year at Betteshanger.

It would not be easy to imagine a greater contrast than that between the methods of my work for Mr. Gladstone and those of the duty which I now undertook. In the former case, everything was strenuous, urgent, and done at high pressure; the great man, when not preoccupied or excited by official worries, was charming, but during office hours there was not much time for amenities of any

REMINISCENCES

kind, and we were all terribly in earnest. Lord Granville began by saying to me, "People think that I am a very idle man; I am sorry to say it is quite true"; as for his correspondence, he said, he opened all his letters himself, and found by experience that most of them, if left alone, would answer themselves.¹ What he wished me to do was to come to his house about eleven o'clock, and to see whether he wanted anything. As often as not, he wanted nothing, or next to nothing: perhaps a few letters to be written, some confidential document to be copied, or an oral message to be taken to the party whip or to some member of the late Liberal Government. With all this was mingled a great deal of most agreeable conversation, and somehow or other the work of the Leadership was very efficiently and adequately performed. If Lord Granville had been a member of the House of Commons, the volume of work would of course have been multiplied by four or five; but, as it was, the place was an easy one. When a debate was imminent, he employed me to help in preparing materials for his speech, searching Hansard's Reports, looking up facts, or perhaps making a *précis* of a blue-book for him; and he had a way, which

¹ His way of destroying confidential letters, if not of the highest importance, was to tear them once across and throw them into the waste-paper basket; but his Private Secretaries, aware of this habit, used to take the necessary measures. I remember, when a Committee of the Cabinet was enquiring into some serious leakage of secrets, being called in to give my opinion about it; the substance of my evidence was that the official cask, unlike ordinary casks, generally leaked at the top and not at the bottom. My subsequent long experience in the public service has entirely confirmed that opinion.

LORD KILBRACKEN

was sometimes rather embarrassing, of suddenly asking one's opinion on some matter, possibly trivial, or possibly of first-class importance; not that he really attached much value, if any, to one's answer, but because, when he was himself considering a subject, it helped him if he could thus ventilate it, and hear someone else express his ideas, however feeble and unconvincing, on the question before him. I will mention one rather ludicrous instance of this habit which remains in my memory. Some of the rooms in his house in Carlton House Terrace were injured by a fire, and, while they were being repaired and redecorated, Lord Granville and his family stayed for some months with his brother, Mr. Frederick Leveson Gower, in South Audley Street. When this protracted visit was coming to an end, I was going through some political work with him in Mr. Leveson Gower's house, when he suddenly said to me, "If you were me, having stayed here all this time and given a great deal of trouble, how much would you give to Freddy's butler?" The question was a difficult one to answer off-hand; but he would have been just as likely to ask my opinion on some matter of high statesmanship, and would have set as much, or as little, value on my reply in the one case as in the other.

He liked to have me by him when he was preparing a speech, even if he had at the moment no specific work to give me; and when he walked down to the House of Lords to deliver it (on these occasions he generally went down on foot) he invariably made me accompany him; but he did not like me to speak to him as we walked, nor even to

REMINISCENCES

walk close beside him; I had to keep a yard or so away; whereas at other times, if we walked together, he would talk the whole time, and as often as not would take my arm. When we had reached the House of Lords he liked me to be there, on the steps of the Throne, throughout the debate,¹ though he hardly ever made any use of me in the House. During the part of the year that he spent at Walmer, my duties were even lighter than in London; I used to go there pretty often, but mainly for the pleasure of seeing him, Lady Granville, and his children, then quite young; and it often happened that he had no work for me to do. Indeed, when I look back on the four or five years of my Private Secretaryship with him, I seem to remember comparatively little work and a great deal of time most agreeably spent in conversations and occupations which had nothing whatever to do with politics. But nothing that I have said should be understood to imply that Lord Granville, as I then knew him, was anything less than a very skilful and tactful party leader, and an extremely able man, very quick and clever, with an almost unequalled knowledge of men and things; who certainly did not seem to work hard, but nevertheless invariably did what he had to do, did it well, knew his brief, and, in the House of Lords and elsewhere, was exceedingly well able to take care of himself. His social

¹ This was the exact opposite of the practice of Mr. Gladstone, who never required the attendance of a Private Secretary at the House of Commons, no matter what the nature of the debate might be. He carried in his head an ample supply of "munitions" for all possible contingencies, and was always perfectly confident and self-reliant.

LORD KILBRACKEN

gifts were famous; and I suppose that, if one were asked who was the most agreeable person that one had ever met, his would be the first name that would occur. He had been brought up in diplomatic society mostly in Paris, where his father was Ambassador, and was universally believed to speak French "like a native." This, however, he himself always strenuously denied, saying that in the whole course of his life he had known of only three Englishmen who could speak French so as to deceive a Frenchman, and that he himself was not one of them.

It may be asked, if this was the nature of my Private Secretaryship, how I managed to fill up the rest of my time during the four years or so that passed after my call to the Bar. As I look back, I seem to remember that I always had plenty to occupy me more or less usefully, though I cannot at this distance of time give the details of my occupations. One thing I may mention which gave me a good deal of interesting work to do. In or about the year 1875 a rich man, T. C. Baring,¹ revived and refounded Hertford College at Oxford, giving it a very large endowment for Fellowships and Scholarships. The first holders of the Fellowships were all nominated by the Founder; one of these posts, tenable by a married man for a period of

¹ T. C. Baring was himself a good scholar, and had been a Fellow of Brasenose: he was son of the Bishop of Durham, a Conservative M.P. and a strong Churchman. His benefactions to his own School (Harrow), to other objects, and finally to Hertford College were on a most magnificent scale. For instance; when money was being raised for a cricket-ground at Harrow, he gave £1,000 under his own name, and £9,000 anonymously.

REMINISCENCES

seven years, was offered to me, and by Jowett's advice I accepted it. For the next two or three years the Fellows were busily employed in drafting and getting into shape the Statutes of the College, and in settling other questions incident to a new foundation; in this I took an active part, going very often to Oxford for the purpose; I also acted as an Examiner at the Fellowship and Scholarship Competitions. Besides this, in order as far as possible to prevent my Greek and Latin from rusting, I examined for some of the University Scholarships at Oxford and at various Public Schools—Eton, Harrow, and Rugby—for the Oxford and Cambridge Schools Examination Board: I think I was sent twice to Harrow, where Dr. Butler, the Head Master, was already a great friend of mine, and has so remained to this day; also twice to Rugby. To Eton I believe I went only once. I remember examining for the Hertford Scholarship at Oxford, with the present Bishop of Lincoln (Hicks) and the present Warden of Keble (Lock) as my colleagues; and for the Craven Scholarships with the late Bishop John Wordsworth, of Salisbury, and James Bryce, now Lord Bryce, an emeritus Cabinet Minister and Ambassador to the United States. On this last occasion Alfred Milner, now Lord Milner, was one of our candidates, and, if I remember right, a successful one.

About this time it was often suggested to me that I should try to get into the House of Commons; but I never as a boy or as a young man had the smallest ambition in that direction; and in this frame of mind I have remained ever since, with one slight exception. When my first Private Secretaryship to

Mr. Gladstone came to an end, I had been galvanized into a non-natural interest in politics and parties; and if, during the first year or two that followed, a candidature had been offered to me, I should no doubt have accepted it, always supposing that I could have afforded it. This I could not have done, unless my father-in-law had offered then, as he most kindly did a year or two later, to make an arrangement by which, without any permanent sacrifice on his part, the necessary funds would have been forthcoming. That he would have done so, if the question of my going into Parliament had been seriously raised, I have no doubt; but the mood which I have mentioned was only a temporary aberration. No suitable seat became available just then, and I soon returned to my normal attitude, never thenceforward discarded.¹ About the year 1879, when preparations were being quietly made on both sides for a general election, six candidatures for constituencies in widely different parts of the United Kingdom were offered to me, and in at least three of these there was, if I remember right, a good prospect of success; this of course was due to the fact that I had been Mr. Gladstone's Private Secretary and was more or less well known to the Whips and party organizers. It was before this that my father-in-law had made the suggestion as to election expenses of which I have already spoken; but my mind was now quite made up, and I declined all offers with thanks. If I had

¹ In these years, while my future was still unsettled, Mr. Gladstone, whenever he alluded to the subject, used to dissuade me from entering Parliament. His opinion about politics as a profession is described later on.

REMINISCENCES

foreseen no other way of doing some useful work, I should no doubt have tried my hand either at the Bar, or at writing, or even at the game of politics, however unwillingly. But by this time I saw pretty clearly that, if I wanted to get into the permanent Civil Service, I should be able to do so before long, and this seemed to me to be my true vocation. Probably my father's example, and the reputation that he had made for himself in official circles, counted for something among the motives that led me to this decision: a decision which I have never for a moment regretted.

We lived during these years, 1874 to 1880, very pleasantly in our little house in Portman Street, with Betteshanger generally open to us as a delightful country home. We used, in London, to dine out a good deal and give small dinners, paid a certain number of country visits in the autumn, and lived a life which, I think, suited us very well, and was certainly enjoyable.

We happened to go to Hawarden at the beginning of 1880, a day or two after Mr. Gladstone's seventieth birthday. Mrs. Gladstone told me that he had said to her, "It is a solemn thought that one has reached such an age; and yet, do what I will, I *cannot* feel myself to be an old man." Certainly he bore no outward sign of old age; his bodily activity seemed to be undiminished, and, although he was not at this time supposed to be a leader of the Liberal party, he had been recalled to politics by the revival of the Eastern Question, and had been for two or three years on the war-path, violently denouncing the Turks and championing the "op-

LORD KILBRACKEN

pressed nationalities." For this purpose, when he was at Hawarden and I in London, he used occasionally to make use of me to consult blue-books or other authorities not readily accessible in the country, and to do other little services for him. At no time had his extraordinary gift of platform oratory been more conspicuous than during the months that preceded the election of 1880, and I shall here insert a description of one of his speeches, delivered, not in the course of his celebrated campaign in Midlothian, but in Marylebone, the parish in which he then lived. The picture that it gives is absolutely true to life. It appeared in the *Outlook* soon after his death, and was signed "W. L. Watson"; I know nothing else of Mr. Watson, but he must have been a remarkably good writer, and if he is alive I hope he will forgive me for reproducing a part of his excellent article.

The writer relates how he first saw Mr. Gladstone by chance in Wigmore Street, and was inclined to think rather poorly of his appearance until he met a glance from his eye, which caused him to pass on "with a sense of having been in that instant examined, commented upon, summed up, and dismissed." He then proceeds as follows:

"The next time I saw Mr. Gladstone was in 1880; the occasion, a meeting of the electors of Marylebone in the Newman Hall, off Oxford Street. His furious crusade approached its triumphant climax, and the Beaconsfield Government was tottering to its fall. How I succeeded in entering that hall I cannot well remember. A terrific rush, a resistless sweep forward, and a seat in the gallery is all I can recall. We, the electors of Marylebone, sat

REMINISCENCES

for an hour listening to local nobodies until the great man should arrive. The hall had no private entrance for the platform, and between the tightly packed auditors on the floor there seemed to be no room for a pin-head to lie, much less for a human being to pass. At last there was a cheer and a huge commotion. By mysterious magic a lane was formed, up which, craning my neck, I saw advancing—what? The Gladstone of the pavement in Wigmore Street? By no means. A pale-faced, slim figure, with the head of age and a rapt, intense gaze struggling forward to the platform, followed by a simply-clothed woman, who busies herself in warding off the hands of enthusiasts eager to touch him, or pat his back, or help him forward. That is Mrs. Gladstone, with the soft face, high-coloured like a girl's, and tremulous mouth; intent on one thing only in this life—her husband. They step up to the platform by a reporter's stool. A dozen willing hands would aid him, but it is hers which grasps his ankle to steady him lest in his eagerness he slip. He does not sit down, but exchanges a few rapid words with the chairman. She begs a seat immediately behind him. Forth he stands and begins at once: 'Mr. Chairman.' She pulls at his overcoat, and one sleeve comes free. Impatiently he stops, while she tugs at the other sleeve; and the coat has scarcely gone from him ere he is flourishing in our faces the free hand: 'Mr. Chairman and fellow-electors of *Marrilbone*,' for so he called our parish, doubtless designedly. Never shall I, an unenthusiastic non-party man, forget those tones. Surrendering myself to the prevalent sentiment, it seemed to me as if someone had touched the stops of a

mysterious organ, that searched us through and through. Two more sentences, and we were fairly launched upon a sea of passion, regardless of Mrs. Gladstone, who sat behind, placidly folding her husband's overcoat. In that torrent of emotion, the petty politics of the hour figured as huge first principles, and the opinions of the people became as the edicts of eternity. As it went on, we became persuaded that the Government, whose resignation was impending, were the most incompetent set of reprobates that an angry heaven had ever sent to be the curse of a country. It grew upon us as a marvel why we had not seen this earlier. Why we had lived under such diabolical ineptitude astounded us with a sense of shame ; and ever and again was rolled out our patent of nobility, 'Fellow-electors of Marrilbone,' until we became enlarged, quickened, glorified by our fraternity.

"Oh, the graces of that speech ! 'Gentlemen, this has been a liquid, an aqueous Government. You remember what it came in upon?' 'Beer,' we shouted, and the orator bowed with a gesture of infinite smiling consent. 'And you see what it is going out upon?' 'Water,' we yelled, remembering Mr. Cross's Bill, and again he bowed in acquiescence, like a conjurer who acknowledges the applause that greets his production, from the breast-pocket of one of the audience, of the watch previously fired from a blunderbuss. In next day's newspaper this passage read : 'Gentlemen, this has been a liquid Government ; it came in on beer and it will got out on water.' Gladstone never said that ; it is but a miserable paraphrase of what was said—of what *we* said. All through a speech of long

REMINISCENCES

tortuous sentences he endowed us with a faculty of apprehension we did not know we possessed. And then the peroration: 'You are shortly to pronounce your verdict, you and the people of these isles; and, whatever that verdict may be, as I hope it will be the true one, I trust it will be clear.' We leaped to our feet and cheered; decidedly we should make it clear. 'I trust it will be emphatic.' We waved our sticks and hats, in emphasis. 'I trust it will be decisive; and that it will ring' (here, with a swing of the arm clear round his neck, and a superb uplifting of the whole frame, he sent his trumpet voice into every cranny of the hall till it rang again) 'from John o' Groats to the Land's End'; and a frantic mass of humanity roared themselves hoarse for a full two minutes. When I stood in the free air outside once more, it seemed somewhat unreasoning, all this ecstasy; clearly I had been Gladstonized; and I voted for him at that election."

The Government, meanwhile, under Disraeli, who had now become Lord Beaconsfield, were busily engaged, as his Foreign Secretary, Lord Salisbury, afterwards confessed, in "putting their money on the wrong horse"; bolstering up the Turks, and opposing and hampering the Russians to the verge of war. Never in my recollection has party feeling run so high; Mr. Gladstone was execrated by nine people out of ten whom one met, and a London mob broke the windows of his house in Harley Street. On the surface, and especially in London, all the indications were favourable to the Government; but in the country at large there were some suspicious symptoms, and the Liberal Whips, as a matter of fact, were beginning to be in

secret extremely confident. An election for Southwark, in which a Conservative candidate won a notable success, tipped the scale, and the Government suddenly appealed to the country. And then—"O, what a surprise!"—they were not only defeated, but routed and scattered to the four winds. I remember that on the second day, when the results of the first day's voting were already known, I was sent to see Adam, the chief Liberal Whip, on some business or other; I said to him, "Pretty good, isn't it?" And his reply was, "Good? Why, we've got it in our pockets." And so, indeed, we had, As usual, when once the tide was seen to have turned, everyone rushed to be on the winning side, and during the last few days the Conservatives lost some dozens of seats which in the earlier days of the struggle they would certainly have retained. Mr. Gladstone, who, although he was by birth and by dialect a native of Liverpool, was able to say with truth that he had not a drop of blood in his body that was not Scottish, won an immense personal triumph in Midlothian, and the result of the election as a whole was to set him on a pinnacle, and to give the Liberals a majority of, I think, about 100 over the Conservatives, and of about 40 over Conservatives and Home Rulers combined.

Lord Beaconsfield immediately resigned, and the Queen sent for Lord Granville and Lord Hartington. It was, however, obvious to everybody, except perhaps the occupant of the throne, that, if Mr. Gladstone was willing to be Prime Minister, Prime Minister he must be; and by this time it was known that he was willing, so there was nothing for it but to acquiesce. In earlier days, before he came

REMINISCENCES

to the head of affairs, he had, I believe, enjoyed a fair share of the Royal favour; but since then two things had happened which had completely changed the Queen's relations with him; his political opinions had diverged very widely from hers, and the influences to which she had been exposed during the long years of her seclusion had been very unfavourable to him personally, and had made her much less tolerant of views differing from her own. Mr. Gladstone used in private to lament this change, but it was part and parcel of the old-fashioned Conservatism which was never quite extinct in him that he was by nature a most loyal subject. If she had treated him with the kindness and friendliness which his age, his character, his long public service, and his obvious personal loyalty might have been thought to deserve, he would have been at her feet. But it is undoubtedly true that he was not an adroit courtier. In this respect he was very inferior to his great rival, who never spared an effort to gain or to retain the favour of his Royal mistress, and knew extremely well how to do it. He used, as we know from his published letters, to address her in a tone of obsequiousness and flattery which seems to have been very acceptable, but of which Mr. Gladstone would have been wholly incapable. Like Elihu in the Book of Job, he might have said, "I know not to give flattering titles; in so doing my Maker would soon take me away."

I cannot refer to the relations between the Queen and Mr. Gladstone without mentioning the debt which they both owed, and which it is not too much to say that the country owed, to the Queen's Secre-

LORD KILBRACKEN

tary, Sir Henry Ponsonby. Among all with whom I had dealings in the public service, I can remember very few who equalled him in wisdom, in good sense, in tact, or in the pleasant manners which make difficulties easy and differences insignificant. I knew him only in his official capacity, but I often think of him even now with admiration, and with a sense of something like personal gratitude and affection.

With Her Majesty's son and successor Mr. Gladstone's relations were of a very different kind. From the year 1872, when I first became a Private Secretary, until my retirement from office in 1909, I had some rather exceptional opportunities of forming an opinion about the Prince of Wales, afterwards Edward VII, from the official point of view; not socially, though of course like other officials I have occasionally dined with him as his guest or in his company, and have had conversations with him at various times; all the more so, because his excellent good sense and good feeling caused him frequently to go out of his way to show his respect and friendship for Mr. Gladstone. This, though it was no more than what everyone who knew him might have expected, was very much to his credit, for his tastes and interests and those of Mr. Gladstone were by no means alike, and I suppose there were few subjects that they regarded from the same point of view. Nor can it be supposed that the Prince's marked civility to Lord Beaconsfield's rival would be specially approved by his august parent. But I believe that they really liked each other, and whenever I saw them together, as for instance at Mr. Gladstone's official

REMINISCENCES

dinners, they seemed thoroughly to enjoy themselves. On these occasions, and on these only, I have seen Mr. Gladstone smoke ; he did so with the air of an habitual smoker, leaning back in his chair, and sometimes exhaling the smoke of his cigarette through his nostrils : an amusing sight to those who knew him well. Judging by what I saw and heard officially of the Prince's intellect and character, I was from 1872 onwards in the habit of saying that, if he lived to come to the throne, he would be one of the best and most efficient kings that this country has ever had. This opinion used to create some surprise, for, except for his steady and conscientious performance of the dull duties to which the will of his Royal mother limited him, the view which the public then had of him did not seem to justify my prophecy : yet no one, I suppose, would now deny that it was amply fulfilled. The facts which justify this estimate of him belong to history, and have no place in these pages. I do not know whether it is true that during his reign he exercised a rather exceptional influence in some spheres of public business, but, judging by what I saw and heard of him during the years when I was behind the scenes, I should have supposed him to be very capable of doing so with good effect.

As for smaller matters, his social gifts certainly seemed to me remarkable ; the way in which he used to talk to each one in turn of his numerous guests has often filled me with wonder. To say a few words to each is easy : to talk as he did is not easy. This power of his was the result partly, no doubt, of long training, but mainly of natural friendliness and kindheartedness, combined with a

very wide knowledge of a good many useful subjects. And I never saw him to greater advantage than when he came to Rugby in the summer of 1909, to open our new Speech-room, and I as Chairman of the Governors had to take a share in the reception. He entered completely into the spirit of the thing, made a most admirable speech, to the boys, and played his part to perfection. The Head of the School, in his address, ventured upon a little joke about an "extra week," which the King thoroughly appreciated and responded to; he did not fail to ask for the extra week, remarking privately afterwards that such weeks were "very much liked by the boys and very much liked by the masters, but not quite so much by the parents." The day was fine, everything went off smoothly, and the programme ended with a tea of a very informal kind in the Head Master's drawing-room, at which the King made himself most agreeable to the small group of guests who were present. It was impossible to watch him, as I did through a great part of that afternoon, without fancying that he was not only not bored by what he had to do, but liked it, and was interested and amused by what he saw and heard. As he finally drove away, I happened to be standing near and overheard him saying to his companion in the carriage something to the effect that it had been a very good function and that he had enjoyed it; and so I believe he really had.

This digression has led me on to a very recent period: I now return to the events which followed the General Election of 1880. As soon as it was settled that Mr. Gladstone was to form a Government, Lord Granville asked me, in his usual abrupt

REMINISCENCES

though most kindly way, what I proposed to do? Was I going to be his Private Secretary, or Mr. Gladstone's? I said at once that I was entirely at his, Lord Granville's, disposal; Mr. Gladstone had set me down, he had picked me up: I was his man. But, I added, I was perfectly ready to serve either of them, as might be thought best apart from my own interests. I then asked whether he was going to the Foreign Office: he replied that he "could not imagine that Gladstone would offer him anything else." In that case, I said, I thought I ought to remind him that although I had a fair knowledge of French, could read it with complete ease and even write it after a fashion, I had never since I was a child had any practice in speaking it, and should certainly make a very poor hand at it, especially at first. He made light of this, but said he would speak to Mr. Gladstone and settle the matter with him. Next evening, I was dining with the Henry Grenfells in St. James's Place, when in the middle of dinner a note was brought to me which had been sent by an official messenger to my house, and had followed me thence; it was from Lord Granville, and was expressed in terms which, I confess, brought a lump into my throat. He informed me that he had "given up his rights in me" to Mr. Gladstone, who wished me, as his principal Private Secretary, to go to his house that evening after dinner and to start helping him with the clerical work involved in the formation of his Government.

The next two or three days were very interesting, and the work was hard. Mr. Gladstone was installed in a small room in Lord Granville's house in

Carlton House Terrace, to which access lay through a larger room in which I sat amid bundles of letters and other documents rapidly accumulating; outside of my door was a staff of messengers, who were kept pretty busily employed. This was my first experience of the formation of a Government, and I am thankful that it was my last; it is a process which does not show human nature under its best aspect, although in this respect it is perhaps not quite so bad as the management of the clerical patronage of the Crown, which had fallen to my lot in Mr. Gladstone's first administration, and which he specially insisted on my resuming on this second occasion. (From him, this was a high compliment, but I would gladly have dispensed with it.) All those to whom office was to be orally offered (and Mr. Gladstone preferred to offer it orally if possible) had to pass through my room, going and coming; and, as I knew most of them, I had some rather amusing conversations. I well remember seeing Chamberlain come out, radiant, from the inner room, having accepted the Presidency of the Board of Trade with a seat in the Cabinet; he had then been only about four years in Parliament, and had every reason to be pleased. I said, "I am glad to be the first person to offer you congratulations"; he thanked me warmly, and ever afterwards, until his disappearance from public life, he would from time to time, when we met, remind me of this conversation. It is perhaps worth recording that, before this, Sir Charles Dilke had been offered the Under-Secretaryship of State at the Foreign Office; a post which suited him exactly as a first stepping-stone; but he would not accept it unless or until he

REMINISCENCES

was assured that Chamberlain was to have a seat in the Cabinet. I believe that Chamberlain might have got into the Cabinet at that time on his merits, but this certainly settled the matter in his favour. Dilke said, "Chamberlain and I are solid ; we stand or fall together," or words to that effect. He (Dilke) was soon afterwards promoted to be President of the Local Government Board, and gave proof of first-rate ability both in his office and in Parliament. In spite of his unfortunate manner and the dullness of his otherwise blameless speeches, he must assuredly have risen very high if his career had not been cut short for reasons quite unconnected with politics. Whenever I came across him, his natural gifts and his knowledge made a great impression on me.

While the Government was being formed, I was sent by Mr. Gladstone to arrange with Lord Beaconsfield's Private Secretaries as to the date of our entry into Downing Street ; this was one of the few occasions on which I had any conversation with the celebrated "Monty Corry," who was for so many years Lord Beaconsfield's right-hand man, confidant, and factotum ; and was now in the act of being raised to the Peerage as Lord Rowton, in acknowledgment of his invaluable services. I can see him now as I then found him, in his shirt-sleeves, his hands literally black with dust, having paused in his work of sorting and destroying papers in order to discuss dates with me. A few days later we took possession, Mr. Gladstone's staff consisting, besides myself, of Edward Hamilton of the Treasury, Horace Seymour, also of the Treasury, and George Leveson Gower, Lord Granville's

nephew; while Herbert Gladstone acted at first as a Parliamentary Private Secretary, and soon afterwards became a Lord of the Treasury. Hamilton, who afterwards succeeded me as principal Private Secretary, was the son of a Bishop of Salisbury who had been a great friend of Mr. Gladstone's; he had been my contemporary at Oxford, and a friend of ours for many years past. He was not in the first class for intellectual gifts, but he was very industrious, painstaking, accurate, and obliging, and in every way pleasant to work with. These qualities gained him many friends, and ultimately raised him to the Joint Secretaryship to the Treasury: but by that time an insidious disease had begun to undermine his health, both mental and bodily, and his last years in the service were very sad ones. He was a bachelor, and during this, Mr. Gladstone's second administration, had a set of rooms on the second floor in Downing Street, while Mr. Gladstone and his family occupied the greater part of the house, and we secretaries worked on the ground-floor.

The two years and a quarter which followed were for me full of interest, mainly on account of my close relations with Mr. Gladstone. During the six years that had passed since the fall of his first Government, I had seen much of him, both at Hawarden and in London; he did not like dining at home alone, and when he was in town and his family elsewhere Mrs. Gladstone generally billeted him out on some friends for dinner, often with my father-in-law in Whitehall Gardens, and not infrequently with us in Portman Street. We used, if there was time, to invite two or three select

REMINISCENCES

friends to meet him: they invariably went away charmed with his discourse, which was never better on great occasions than on small ones such as these. I remember Andrew Lang, who highly disapproved of him as a politician, beginning as soon as the great man had gone: "I say, what a delightful man Gladstone is," and continuing in an enthusiastic tone which was rather foreign to his critical spirit. And I remember how, at another of these small dinners, Lord Selborne, then Lord Chancellor, was one of our guests; at that time the Prime Minister had no official precedence, and, when the moment came for the men to leave the room, Mr. Gladstone most characteristically, and only half in fun, refused to go out before the Lord Chancellor. Lord Selborne was not less firm in refusing to go before the Prime Minister, and they stood arguing the point in the doorway for at least a minute, when Mr. Gladstone reluctantly gave way. I had come to know him very intimately, but my intercourse with him during these years of office was such as to bring me even nearer to him than before. Whatever the reason may have been, he certainly treated me with the utmost confidence, and occasionally talked to me on subjects which, I believe, he seldom mentioned to anyone. I am glad to reflect that during all those years, from 1872 to 1898, I was fully aware of the privilege which I enjoyed and thoroughly appreciated it; the only thing that I regret is that I did not make an even greater use of the opportunities which I had of being in his company; for instance, I think I might have gone oftener than I did to Hawarden without being unwelcome to him or to his family.

LORD KILBRACKEN

But, as it was, I had relations with him which enabled me, as I think, to know him thoroughly, and I must say at once that the more I knew of him, the more I admired him. It will be understood that I am now speaking of him as a man, and not as a statesman; when one came to know him really intimately, the man was everything, and his connection with politics became secondary and incidental. I certainly was, as will be seen, no blind admirer; from the first I approached him with an eye which would have been perfectly ready to detect flaws in his character, and I was perhaps rather sceptically inclined. But the more I saw of him—and for many years I was so completely behind the scenes that I am sure no serious fault could have escaped me—the more amazed I was at the nobility and purity of his character; a character which was thought by many to be complex and obscure, but was in truth (to use a phrase of R. L. Stevenson's) "radiantly simple."

The essential fact was the extraordinary intensity and vehemence of all his impulses. If we think for a moment of human beings as actuated by an internal force measurable in units of horse-power, and if we take the figure of an ordinary man to be 100, and that of an exceptionally energetic person to be 200, then Mr. Gladstone's horse-power was at least 1,000. And this tremendous force could be turned on in any direction and for any purposes great or small; to use the well-worn simile of the steam-hammer, it could break a bar of steel or crack a nut. The various and innumerable motives which impel ordinary men sluggishly and feebly towards their respective aims and

REMINISCENCES

objects, were in him fiery swords, driving him with almost irresistible force towards the goal on which for the moment his whole mind was concentrated. This, I have said, was the essential fact—the extraordinary strength and vehemence of his impulses: but what was equally important was that he possessed, in a no less unusual degree, the power of self-control and self-discipline. He had early in life formed his own ideals, which were of the highest and noblest kind, and with a view to their attainment he had laid down rules for himself; this, I believe, many people do, but what was remarkable about Mr. Gladstone was that he strictly observed the rules that he had laid down. The result of this was that the violent impulses, which to so many men bring ruin, were by him tamed and controlled, and turned into serviceable and sustaining forces. Now and then for a few moments and on rare occasions they were allowed to show themselves, as for instance on the memorable occasion in 1852 when, answering Disraeli in the House of Commons, his utterance was choked by passion, and for once in his life he was unable to finish the sentence that he had begun. But such incidents were almost unknown in later years, and I myself never witnessed one; only from time to time a few fiery sparks gave a reminder of the volcano within him. And it is hardly necessary to add that this intense natural vehemence, thus effectively curbed and guided, was the secret of his ascendancy, and of the unbounded enthusiasm which he kindled in nearly all who knew him, and in many hundreds of thousands who had never seen his face or heard his voice.

LORD KILBRACKEN

Such was the control which Mr. Gladstone had established over his naturally strong feelings that he sometimes, to those who did not know him well, appeared to be hard-hearted or indifferent, whereas nothing could possibly be further from the truth. He felt most keenly and acutely, but he considered it a strict duty not to indulge in useless grief or worry, but, if and when nothing practical was to be gained by dwelling on a misfortune or a loss, to put it aside and to return as far as possible to the ordinary round of duties and relaxations. And on such occasions it was by no means easy to make him perceive that others, who recognized no such rule of conduct, would be likely to misjudge him. If he had himself seen another man behaving in this way, he would have perfectly understood his motives, and would have put the best possible construction upon them, and he was slow to believe that others would not be at all likely to treat him and his motives in the same way.

It is undoubtedly true that he allowed himself to be taken to a theatre—for he was one of those people who never go to the play on their own initiative—on the evening when the news of Gordon's death had appeared in the papers, but was not yet officially known. The engagement had been made long before; when the time came, Edward Hamilton, who by this time had succeeded me as his Private Secretary, suggested that it should be cancelled, but his protest was waved aside by Mrs. Gladstone—"O dear, nothing teases him so much as altering a plan at the last moment"—and he, distinguishing as he always did between newspaper reports and official certainties, seems

REMINISCENCES

to have passively acquiesced. This, of course, does not excuse his conduct, but it explains it.

In after years he spoke to me two or three times, at long intervals, about the Gordon episode. No one who heard what he said, or saw the manner in which he said it, could doubt the intensity or the sincerity of his feeling on the subject. He held that his Government had in the first instance made a mistake in sending Gordon to the Soudan, and that they had made a greater and far more serious one in failing to support him adequately and in good time. He entirely admitted his own responsibility, as head of the Government, and felt it most acutely; though it was well known at the time that the choice of Gordon for this particular mission, and the management of all the subsequent arrangements arising out of that choice, had been left by him to a Committee of the Cabinet, of which he himself was not a member. That this fact did not by any means cancel his responsibility he was himself most fully aware. I have mentioned on a subsequent page the want of interest in all military or semi-military matters which, in view of his official position, was one of his most unfortunate characteristics, impelling him, as it sometimes did, to leave almost entirely to others the conduct of matters in which he, his Government, and the country were vitally interested.

I have been told that many years ago, when a great sorrow came upon him in the death of one of his children at a very early age, he was for some hours in a state of such violent grief as to cause positive alarm to those around him. Then, suddenly, his sense of duty got the upper hand;

LORD KILBRACKEN

thenceforward he was perfectly calm, and returned in all respects to the demeanour and habits of his every-day life.

As a man, Mr. Gladstone was in a class by himself. He was an extraordinarily good man, but I think I may have known others as good; his intellectual gifts were wonderful, but for pure intellect I have known others whom I should place as high, if not higher. What differentiated him from the rest of the human race was, first, the combination of these qualities with the stupendous driving power of which I have spoken; second, the stern and effective control which he maintained over this mighty force; and, third, the amazingly serviceable quality of his mind, which was always at his command, always rose to the occasion, and unfailingly supplied him with an endless flow of thoughts, arguments, and words upon any topic under heaven with which he had to deal. There were, perhaps, some spheres of thought in which he did not move easily or freely, but they were such that he very rarely had to concern himself with them; and in quickness of apprehension, and insight into the heart of a difficult matter, provided that it was one that came within his normal field of vision, he was unrivalled.

Lord Bryce, who knew Mr. Gladstone well and was a very competent judge, in a recent letter to me wrote as follows: "What used to puzzle me in him were (1) his extraordinary want of, and apparently even want of interest in, all knowledge of the Sciences of Nature; and (2) strange gaps even in that sort of knowledge, *e.g.* of ecclesiastical and constitutional matters, which did interest him." I

REMINISCENCES

think this remark has truth in it. But his stores of knowledge were nevertheless vast, and their resources were always absolutely and instantaneously at his command.

It is said, I believe truly, that Mr. Gladstone when he left Oxford would have liked to take Orders, but was successfully urged into politics by his father. Be that as it may, I am strongly of opinion that politics are a profession for which he was not in all respects well qualified, and that they were never really congenial to him. This may seem surprising, but I believe it to be true. As, however, he was to be a politician, his sense of duty, which in him was nothing less than a passion, impelled him to put his whole strength into the business, and he did so, with the result that we all know. But in spite of all his marvellous Parliamentary gifts and successes, which he no doubt enjoyed keenly at the moment, his heart was never really in his profession. He saw the ugly side of it as plainly as any man could see it; he had long since made up his mind to face it, but it never ceased to disgust him. His affections were set on another and a very different world, in which he lived and moved and had his being. This fact compelled the love and admiration of the few who were aware of it, but it by no means increased his efficiency as the leader of a political party.

It was generally thought, even by many of Mr. Gladstone's friends and admirers, that when he spoke, as he often did, of his wish to be out of politics, to retire and live among his books at Hawarden, he was deceiving himself, and that he really loved office, and Parliament, and would

have been unhappy if his wish had been granted ; while his enemies quite honestly and openly regarded him as being in this matter a conscious hypocrite. But it follows from what I have said that they were all perfectly wrong, and I am sure that any one of the few still living who knew him intimately would support this assertion. Often when we were alone he spoke to me strongly of the repulsiveness of some phases of political life, and his words came evidently from his heart. One expression of his remains in my mind : I had spoken of "the hard things that are said in politics." "The hard things that are *said* in politics ! What are they," he asked, "compared to the hard things that are *done* in politics ?" He spoke with intense feeling and emphasis. His wish to be out of it all, and to possess his soul before he died, was most genuine and extremely strong ; but it was in perpetual conflict with his consciousness of his own great powers, and with the sense of duty which impelled him to use them for purposes which seemed to him to involve moral questions of right and wrong ; and this, coupled with the pressure of his party followers, was enough to keep him in harness till his eighty-fifth year, to the detriment of his reputation, to his own heart-felt regret, and to that of all who knew him best and loved him most.

I have said that politics were to him a duty, and that his heart was elsewhere. One result of this was that he habitually omitted many of the minor arts and crafts of politicians, which he certainly would have practised if he had really cared for the game. For instance : although his kindness and courtesy to the humblest individuals were proverbial, he

REMINISCENCES

could hardly be got to be decently attentive and polite to his own supporters in the House of Commons. He was himself absolutely unlike them, and yet, as I have said, he habitually made the mistake of "imputing himself," and of supposing that other men were keen, as he was, about questions of right and wrong, and indifferent, as he was, about small civilities and invitations to dinner. And it was this same habit of self-imputation which more than anything else led him to misjudge men, as he undeniably did very often, and sometimes with disastrous results. The average man, "*l'homme moyen sensuel*," was a creature whom he did not in the least understand, and in whose existence he was inclined to disbelieve, except when the truth was absolutely forced upon him. His mistakes were nearly always on the favourable side; he generally started by overrating the goodness and the intelligence of those with whom he had to do; and this was the more easy, because in conversation he was always perfectly ready and able to supply the whole substantial part, and the other person had only to fill up the gaps and to appear sympathetic; that was enough to give Mr. Gladstone a favourable impression of his character and intellect. Still, he was, after all, open to conviction, and, as Gurdon once said to me, Mr. Gladstone would go on believing in a man when anyone else would have given him up as hopeless; but, when he was once convinced of his mistake, then woe betide the subject of it. Mr. Gladstone's condemnation was vehement and durable in proportion to the strength of his feelings and the consequent violence of his reaction.

LORD KILBRACKEN

It must, however, be admitted that not only in his classification of individuals but in other matters, sometimes very important, his gift of judgment—his power of weighing pros and cons and deciding rightly between alternative courses—was occasionally deficient. This was the result of two causes, of which the first was the amazing subtlety and ingenuity of his intellect, which often discovered reasons for or against a given course that were quite unintelligible to a plain man, and were in fact either worthless or nearly so, though to him they appeared at the moment quite otherwise. And the second cause was the fact that his prepossessions, like all his other feelings and impulses, were so strong that it was not easy for him to discard them altogether. Of this he was himself quite unconscious, but so it was. And, feeling strongly as he did even about little trumpery things, he was often influenced—again quite unconsciously—by very inadequate motives. I will give an instance of this. After the death of Lord Beaconsfield, which occurred during the Easter recess, it was universally expected, with or without sufficient reason, that, when Parliament met, Mr. Gladstone would be present and would at once make a speech about him. The day of meeting came, and the House and galleries were crowded; but Mr. Gladstone was not there, and all that happened was that the Whip, Lord Richard Grosvenor, gave notice in the Prime Minister's name of a motion for the erection of a monument to Lord Beaconsfield in Westminster Abbey. The disappointment was great, and even among Mr. Gladstone's supporters his absence was strongly condemned. But why was he

REMINISCENCES

not there? In the first place, the duty of pronouncing a eulogy over one whom he detested¹ and regarded as a wicked man was most distasteful to him, and, like a child, he wanted to put it off as long as he could; and in the second place, he would have had, in order to be in the House, to leave Hawarden a day earlier than he had intended, a sacrifice to which he could not easily reconcile himself. Another incident comes back to my mind, which shows how strongly he sometimes felt about petty matters. In the autumn of 1880 the European Powers were coercing Turkey, and Turkey was obstinate. A naval demonstration had produced no result, and it looked as if we were on the verge of a very dangerous war. Mr. Gladstone had most reluctantly come up from Hawarden for some meetings of the Cabinet, and was in London, awaiting the Turk's final reply. One morning he was sitting at his desk and going through the day's work as usual; I was standing by his side. The door opened very quietly, and Lord Granville, then Foreign Secretary, came in on tip-toe with a paper in his hand. I saw him at once, but Mr. Gladstone, intent on his work, was unconscious of his presence. Lord Granville then, brandishing the paper (which was a deciphered telegram) above

¹ The word "detested" has been challenged by some who think the expression too strong. I must, however, decline to alter it. There is a well-known passage in *Ivanhoe* which comes to my mind when I think of Mr. Gladstone's feelings towards his great rival:—" 'I forgive him, Sir Knight,' said Rowena, 'as a Christian.' 'That means,' said Wamba, 'that she does not forgive him at all.' " It is obvious from Lord Beaconsfield's published correspondence that he detested Mr. Gladstone, and such feelings are generally reciprocal (1930).

his head, proceeded to execute a *pas de joie*, still silent and on tip-toe, round the room; he danced it very gracefully, with wavings of his hands, and at last met Mr. Gladstone's astonished gaze. Thereupon he stopped, and read out his telegram: the Turk had surrendered. Instantaneously Mr. Gladstone exclaimed, with indescribable fervour: "Thank God! Then I can go down by the 2.45."

I have already referred to the conflict, which often harassed him in his political life, between that which seemed to him right and that which was obviously expedient. I am quite certain that he never consciously preferred the "*utile*" to the "*honestum*," but, as I have said on a previous page, he had the unfortunate power of finding subtle and ingenious reasons for doing the thing that he wanted to do; he did not often exercise this power, he exercised it very seldom; but he sometimes did so, and his enemies have very naturally made the most of it. On the other hand, instances of his doing what he thought right, to the despair of Whips, colleagues, and supporters, were pretty frequent. A conspicuous instance of this occurred during the debates about Charles Bradlaugh, who, being a professed atheist, was returned to the House of Commons as a supporter of Mr. Gladstone, and was about to go through the form of taking the oath, when the Conservatives objected, and managed to make a great deal of very useful party capital out of the incident. There was a great fuss, both in Parliament and in the country, and the whole affair was loathsome to Mr. Gladstone, then Prime Minister, whose feelings about Bradlaugh's doctrines were probably much stronger

REMINISCENCES

than those of any one among the Tory objectors. I do not remember the details of the squabble: but a point was reached at which Mr. Gladstone, by taking a certain course unfavourable to the admission of Bradlaugh, might have got rid of the whole business, which was doing a good deal of harm to him and to his party. Unfortunately the course suggested was one which he in his conscience could not approve; he thought it unfair to Bradlaugh; it was pressed upon him by colleagues and by Whips, and he went through a period of painful hesitation and doubt, which lasted for about twenty-four hours. Then quite suddenly his mind was made up; I was present when it happened, as he sat at his desk; he saw his duty plain before him and saw that he must support Bradlaugh. Till then he had been depressed and pre-occupied; thenceforward he was perfectly at ease and cheerful, "like a man inspired," and the speech which he made on the subject in the House of Commons is reckoned among the best of his many wonderful performances.

It follows naturally from what I have written about him that he had an ample supply of a quality which among the statesmen and politicians whom I have known, and I have known a good many, has been painfully rare, namely, the supreme quality of courage. He used himself to say that he had known only three men who possessed what he called "political courage" in a high degree, and that they were Sir Robert Peel, Lord John Russell, and Disraeli. The inclusion of this last name was a fine tribute to his lifelong antagonist, whom he regarded with unspeakable dislike and distrust.

And he used generally to add, "I purposely exclude Palmerston, who had the appearance and reputation of courage without the reality."

It must be admitted that there were some important Departments of State in whose affairs he never took any interest; in fact, I think it might be said that the only two in whose business he was naturally and genuinely interested were the Treasury and the Board of Trade. As Prime Minister he was, of course, obliged to think about foreign affairs, and he saw all the Foreign Office drafts and despatches; but this to him was generally task-work, and, except in cases when his generous and laudable interest in the "oppressed nationalities," in Turkey or elsewhere, took effect, his criticisms and suggestions were few, and nearly always in the direction of peace, non-intervention, and *laissez-faire*. I was for the last fifteen years of his life Under-Secretary of State for India; during that time I saw him very often and he talked very freely to me, but I doubt whether he ever spoke to me about Indian affairs. I never heard him say a word which showed the slightest interest in the Navy or the Army, except in so far as their cost, which he was always anxious to cut down, affected the Estimates; nor can I remember his ever referring with pride or satisfaction to any British feat of arms, ancient or modern, though he was often eloquent about the prowess of the "*Montenegreens*," as he always called them, in their wars with the Turks. If ever there was a statesman who deserved to be called "a man of peace," Mr. Gladstone was that man. Nevertheless, there were moments when, if his blood was up and if there

REMINISCENCES

was a *casus belli* which appealed to his conscience, he could be as fierce and as patriotic as anyone. Witness the so-called "Penjdeh incident" of 1885, when there was for a few days real danger of a war with Russia, who had put herself in the wrong by some military encroachments in Afghanistan. Mr. Gladstone moved a vote of credit in the House of Commons, displaying in his speech a most firm and determined, not to say warlike attitude; and by so doing probably did much towards preventing a war.

I have often been asked during the present war (1916) what I thought Mr. Gladstone's attitude would have been if he had been alive at this day. I can answer the question without hesitation, bearing in mind the fact that he had, as will easily be believed, the strongest possible feeling about the sanctity of treaties and international engagements, and the moral obligation to observe them.¹ He would, during the ten years that preceded the war, have been a strong and outspoken opponent of the *entente* with France and Russia, and would have supported every attempt during that period to cut down expenditure on the Navy and the Army. But from the moment when the Germans violated the neutrality of Belgium, he would, however inconsistently, have been for immediate war; and their

¹ I am quite aware that one of his speeches contains a passage which has been quoted as throwing doubt on his whole-hearted adherence to the guarantee of Belgian neutrality. The words which he then used were merely an instance of his habit of guarding himself against the possible effect of any general statement. That the violation of Belgian territory would have affected him as stated in the text, I am absolutely certain.

subsequent conduct in Belgium and elsewhere would have made him one of the most vehement and determined supporters of "a fight to a finish."

With the limitations which I have described, it is evident that Mr. Gladstone was not in all respects, from my point of view, a heaven-born Prime Minister. But on his own subjects he was, as an official, supremely good, and his marvellous gift of speech, never greater than when he was taken unawares and had to reply on the spur of the moment, together with the indescribable influence of his great and noble character, his high aims, his sympathy with the poor and the oppressed, and his infectious energy and enthusiasm, were more than enough to cover and to compensate for the deficiencies which I have mentioned. It was only during the course of an administration that his weak points at times made themselves felt; in opposition and in attack he was irresistible, and in office he rose splendidly to every great occasion, though much of the everyday work would have been better done by an inferior man.

I end as I began, by saying that as a statesman Mr. Gladstone was very great, but a mortal; he had superlative gifts for that kind of work, but he had the "defects of his qualities," and perhaps some others into the bargain. It may be said of him, as is said of Œcumenical Councils in one of the Thirty-nine Articles, that he "might err, and did sometimes err," being no more than human. But as a man, and in respect of what the same Article calls "the things pertaining to God," he was, as I have said before, in a class by himself, and it is as a man, and not as a statesman, that

REMINISCENCES

all who knew him intimately must always think of him with unbounded admiration and affection.

In his relations with his principal Private Secretary—I speak, of course, from my own experience—he was as delightful and charming as it was possible to be. He kept one or two drawers in his desk locked with a key of his own, and about their contents I was supposed to know nothing, though as a matter of fact he was not very secretive even about them, so far as I was concerned. Subject to this single exception, he treated me with complete confidence. As to political matters, he used to talk to me exactly as if I had been one of his colleagues in the Cabinet, or, I should rather say, far more openly than he did to most of them, and documents of all kinds, whether personal or political, with the exception aforesaid, were open to me, and nearly all were under my care and in my keeping. This was an essential part of his scheme for getting the maximum of help out of his subordinates; it saved him an infinity of time and trouble, and of course I, knowing everything, was far better able to serve him and to anticipate his wants and wishes than I should otherwise have been. Moreover, it was often a great comfort and relief to him to have someone to whom he could talk quite openly about the things that were on his mind; and talk he did—“it’s he that was able,” as an Irishman would say. Many and many a time, as he sat at his desk and I stood at his side, I have seen him warm up over a subject; turn half round in his chair towards me, and, with all the intonations of voice and many of the gestures which he would have used in the House of Commons, deliver a speech of five

LORD KILBRACKEN

minutes, ten minutes, or even more, ostensibly for my sole benefit, but really for his own, his happiness depending largely on a free use of the safety-valve. Many of these impromptu speeches, if they could have been reported, would have ranked among his best performances; he spoke on such occasions, just as he spoke in the House of Commons, without any conscious effort, merely pouring out the thoughts that arose in him, and automatically clothing them in the most forcible and appropriate language.

But, great as was the pleasure of being in his company and working for him in London, it was at Hawarden that one saw him at his best. He was there in a mood wholly different from that which was habitual to him elsewhere, and his happiness reacted upon all who came in contact with him. When I think of him now, eighteen years after his death, it is not Downing Street that I recall, nor any of the familiar surroundings in which I used to meet him in London; it is Hawarden, the long walks with him in the Park—that Park which he used very modestly to describe as “not in the first class, but quite at the top of the second class”—or the shorter ones to or from the church which he daily frequented. Often, when I arrived by train either at Sandycroft or at Broughton Hall Station, I have seen the Hawarden carriage waiting, and, not many yards away, the great man himself, in his well-known light grey suit and soft black wide-awake hat, ready to take me at once for a walk of an hour or two before I was allowed to enter the Castle, while my companion, if I had one, and my luggage went up in the carriage.

REMINISCENCES

His conversation on these occasions was delightful, immensely varied, but very seldom indeed touching on public affairs; latterly I might say never. He would, however, sometimes tell interesting stories of his old experiences in Parliament or in the Cabinet, and would dilate on the merits of Sir Robert Peel or Lord Aberdeen, two of his greatest heroes, or on the demerits of Lord Palmerston, whom he disliked, and always with copious illustrations. And the writing down of these names has recalled to my mind, perhaps rather inconsequently, three others which he used to mention to me in a very different context. There were, he used to say, three men whom he had had opportunities of knowing, whom he had never known, and whom it was to him an enduring regret not to have known as friends, namely, Sir Walter Scott, Dr. Arnold, and Lord Melbourne. His feeling as to Sir Walter is natural enough; but the selection of the other two, regard being had to his opinions and predilections, is rather curious. It had been arranged, he told me, through the introduction of his friend W. K. Hamilton, that he should pay a long visit to Dr. Arnold at his home among the Lakes, Fox How; but this was prevented, first by the illness of Mr. Gladstone's father, and then by Dr. Arnold's death. It is interesting to speculate as to the effect which might have been produced on Mr. Gladstone, at that early stage in his career, by close contact with an older man of such force and ascendancy as Dr. Arnold, whose opinions on many subjects were so unlike his own; while, as regards Lord Melbourne, it is a strong proof of the charm and fascination of the man, that Mr. Glad-

LORD KILBRACKEN

stone, in spite of much that must have been anti-pathetic to him in Lord Melbourne's public and private character, should never have ceased to regret having missed the chance of enjoying his friendship.

There was often, of course, a great deal to be said about Homer, on whom during several years he generally had a work in hand, and about literature generally, ancient and modern. There were some branches of it for which he cared much less than might have been expected, but in those for which he did care he was extremely strong. Chief among these was theology, of which he was reputed, I believe quite correctly, to know more than any other man in England, and on this subject, or on ecclesiastical matters generally, he would talk for an indefinite time upon very slight encouragement. It was noticeable, indeed, that with the exception of theology, political history, Homer, and novels, his knowledge of books, though extensive, seemed to rest mainly on what he had read long before, as a young man. University matters afforded an almost inexhaustible topic, and he had a prepossession, which in his heart he well knew to be not wholly rational, but which was perfectly childlike and harmless, in favour of Oxford as against all the other Universities of the world. He loved Oxford with his whole soul, and I suppose that his ejection from the representation of the University in 1865 must have been the heaviest blow that he ever received in politics. It is pleasant to remember that his forgiveness of his Alma Mater was complete, and that he sent her his blessing from his death-bed. Throughout the twenty-six

REMINISCENCES

years of my friendship with him, I never ceased to be conscious that my Oxford record was an important asset in my favour.

It is true that he used often to repeat himself: some subject, some piece of news, some anecdote that he had heard would from time to time take possession of his mind, and would appear and reappear in his conversation for days, or weeks, or even longer. But I am sure that most of his hearers felt, as I always did, that this mattered little. It was invariably a pleasure to listen again to what one had heard before, thanks to his admirable delivery, his command of words, and his grand voice. I remember that Mrs. Gladstone once told him of a small child of her acquaintance who, being asked if he knew what a parable was, replied, "A story with a hiding." This not very remarkable saying pleased him so much that for two or three weeks he constantly told it to any listener who could be by any means supposed to be sympathetic. But the anecdote which was perhaps his favourite, and had a "run" of several years, had been told to him by Mr. Leveson Gower, and was as follows: Dr. Waddington, Dean of Durham, who was a survivor from the days when "two-bottle men" were not uncommon, was dining with a host who, when the port had gone round the usual number of times, addressed to the Dean the customary formula, "Mr. Dean, will you have any more wine?" at the same time pushing back his chair. To which the Dean, without moving, replied, "When I have finished that which is before me." The tone of indignant surprise in which Mr. Gladstone used to deliver the Dean's

LORD KILBRACKEN

utterance was inimitably good. He had also his favourite poetical quotations; I will mention two which happen to be specially vivid in my memory; one from James Smith's poem on inappropriate surnames:

"*Mr. Swift* hobbles onwards, no mortal knows how,
He moves as if cords had entwined him;
Mr. Metcalf ran off upon meeting a cow,
With pale *Mr. Turnbull* behind him."

The other quotation, from a sonnet of Wordsworth's, was of a very different kind:

"So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn,
Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea,
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathèd horn."

The sound of that magnificent last line is still, after an interval of thirty or forty years, fresh in my memory.

It was noticeable that he never, or hardly ever, used the Glynnes language,¹ which was constantly spoken by Mrs. Gladstone and most of his nearest relations. Its merits, as a forcible and humorous form of expression, were so great that his abstention was curious. Nor—but this might have been expected—did he use the common, external slang of the day; but there were rare exceptions. I

¹ This was a sort of family slang, very amusing and expressive, which was used by the Glynnes, Gladstones, and Lytteltons. Lord Lyttelton wrote a dictionary of it, and a selection from it is given in Mr. John Bailey's edition of Lady Frederick Cavendish's Diaries. Mrs. Gladstone used it habitually. I remember her coming into my official room one morning, limping, and saying with a cheerful smile, "Such a quiz! I've sprouted a lameness."

REMINISCENCES

remember that once, when he had gone out of his way in a speech in the House of Commons to pay off a grudge against Lord Salisbury, he said to me next morning, "You saw that I gave Salisbury a wipe?" And it was amusing, when he was going through the accumulation of letters known as "rubbish," to hear him ejaculate, "Oh bosh!" whenever he came on some specially idiotic item, pronouncing the two words with great emphasis, but so rapidly as to make one word of them. It was a very characteristic habit.

It was commonly said that Mr. Gladstone was deficient in the sense of humour, but this cannot be admitted without large reservations. A sense of humour he certainly had, but it was rather capricious and untrustworthy; he thoroughly enjoyed a joke, but the jokes that he enjoyed were not always the best ones, and jokes which everyone else enjoyed sometimes failed to appeal to him. It was noticeable that the best humorous passages always occurred in his most spontaneous speeches; the more carefully his speech was prepared, the less likely was it that any attempt at humour would be successful. It is certain that he often moved the House of Commons to long and hearty laughter, and that in private life, if he was among his own family or with intimate friends, he could be exceedingly amusing, playful, and full of fun. But the fact is that he was apt, whether in public or in private, to be too much and too earnestly interested in the subject of conversation to be inclined to treat it jocosely, or even humorously.

About his religion, which was the central fact of his existence, and which at Hawarden was in a

LORD KILBRACKEN

quiet way constantly conspicuous, I shall say almost nothing. He did not, even in his most expansive moments, talk much to me about it, any more than he talked about the circulation of his blood or the action of his muscles, or anything else necessary to one's existence that one takes for granted. It is enough to record that, having had every opportunity of judging, I can only confirm the universal opinion of all who knew him well, that a more truly and devoutly religious man never lived. But he was not only religious: religion with him was much indeed, but it was so because it was a help towards something higher still. Of no man could it be said with more absolute certainty and conviction that he

. . . "worshipped in the Temple's inner shrine,
God being with him when we knew it not."

Mrs. Gladstone's existence was so closely bound up with that of her husband that it was impossible to be intimate with him without being almost equally intimate with her. She was, as is well known, a very remarkable woman, and played a most important part in his life; he told her everything, political or non-political, that passed through his mind or came within his knowledge; this she thoroughly appreciated and enjoyed, and was always eager for news—"grub," as she called it in the Glynnesse language—but she was perfectly trustworthy and discreet, and I cannot remember a single instance in which any secret of the slightest importance became known through her fault. She was very clever, and had both wit and humour, but her mind resembled the writing-table of a man

REMINISCENCES

who systematically keeps his papers upon it in what seems to be complete disorder, and yet can always produce with very little delay any important document that may be required. She seldom to my knowledge, during the years in which I knew her, read a book of any kind, hardly even a magazine article, and it seems to me now that I scarcely ever saw her read a newspaper; yet she always knew quite sufficiently for her own purposes what was going on. In spite of untidiness and shiftlessness, there was an unmistakable element of greatness about her, and the nickname of "*the grande dame*," by which she was known to some of her family and friends, was not undeserved. I have said that Mr. Gladstone, with all his great and extraordinary qualities, was not an ideal Prime Minister; I might equally say that Mrs. Gladstone's preoccupations and habits of mind were not those of a Prime Minister's ideal wife. Her disregard of conventionalities, her carelessness about small social duties, her absorption in philanthropic and family matters, with other petty imperfections which in other surroundings would have been quite unimportant, prevented her from being as useful as she should have been to her husband's career, and made her occasionally a positive hindrance. She was sometimes a thorn in the side of Private Secretaries and Whips, and she not unfrequently tried the patience of the great man himself; she tried it, but I never knew it fail. His devotion to her was unbounded, and she deserved it. Her kindness of heart was the prominent fact of her character; anyone who was ill or in distress at once saw the best side of her, and her best side was an uncommonly good one. To

me and mine her kindness was great and constant ; I soon had a hearty affection for her, which grew with time, and was never stronger than during those last two sad years by which her life outlasted that of her husband.

Mr. Gladstone, on coming into office in 1880, had again combined the Chancellorship of the Exchequer with the Prime Ministership, and the work which was thus brought into our office, and more especially our relations with the Board of Inland Revenue, where Mr. Gladstone's ex-Secretary, West, was now Deputy Chairman, were to me most instructive and profitable. It may be interesting if I record here the recipe, which Mr. Gladstone gave me one day in conversation, for a speech on financial matters : "Get up your figures," he said, "thoroughly and exhaustively, so as to have them absolutely at your fingers' ends, and then give them out as if the *whole* WORLD was interested in them"—with a tremendous emphasis on "the whole world."

At the end of the Session of 1880 Mr. Gladstone had an attack of what I now believe to have been influenza, though the disease was not then recognized as such or known by that name. It left him weak and out of sorts. It was arranged that he should have a trip round England and Scotland in one of the Castle Line steamships, called the *Grantully Castle*, the Chairman and Manager of the Line being Sir Donald Currie, a supporter of Mr. Gladstone's in Parliament. My wife and I were invited to go with him, and had a very agreeable and interesting experience. The ship was for those

REMINISCENCES

days a large one, and had excellent accommodation for a very considerable number of passengers; whereas we were a party of only about twenty, and lived in the greatest comfort and luxury. Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone, Sir Donald Currie and two or three Directors of the Company, and a few relations and friends nominated by Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone made up the party. We started from Gravesend, went along the whole length of the South Coast, stopping for a day at Dartmouth: then round the Land's End to Dublin, where we landed for a few hours: thence to the Clyde, where we anchored for some hours at the Tail of the Bank, and then on by slow stages up the West Coast of Scotland, anchoring always for the night. Some of us landed on the island of Skye, and made a short expedition inland, after which I quitted the ship, went to Oban in a tender belonging to the Castle Line, and thence south by train; while the rest of the party proceeded through the Pentland Firth and down the East Coast of Scotland and England, with no further stoppage, and so back into the Thames. The whole thing took about ten days; my own share of it lasted a week; the weather was lovely most of the time, and the trip was altogether a great success. Mr. Gladstone thoroughly enjoyed it, and sat most of the time on the bridge, delighting in the scenery or reading *David Copperfield*. It was twice repeated in following years, but on these two occasions, as a much larger party had been invited, and the character of the voyage completely changed, I declined with thanks the offer of a berth.

It is perhaps worth recording that I am one of

the very few persons ¹ who, not being Privy Councillors, have been present during part—a very short part, it is true—of a meeting of the Cabinet, and have listened to their deliberations. They were to meet, on this particular occasion, in Mr. Gladstone's room in the House of Commons; when the time came, he was very busily engaged over some work which I had put before him, and he allowed them to take their places and asked one of them (Childers) to open the business, before he finished what he was writing and dismissed me. Childers complied, and I suppose I was in the room for about five minutes after the discussion began. Needless to say that Mr. Gladstone was quite wrong in asking Childers to begin before I had left the room; but no one of his colleagues thought it worth while to object.

It was, I think, in the winter of 1881-2 that Mr. Gladstone first spoke to me seriously about his wish to put me into the permanent Civil Service, and in doing so he repeated what he had often said to me before, and what I am sure he himself entirely believed, namely, that he would very soon disappear finally from political life. He regarded himself as having taken office with a special mission, which he hoped before long to be able to regard as fulfilled; and, as soon as this should be the case, he was determined to resign. Things had not gone

¹ This paragraph is now (1930) out of date. During the time when I was cognizant of such matters the admission of anyone, not being a Privy Councillor, to the Cabinet room when the Cabinet was sitting was regarded as a species of sacrilege, and happened exceedingly seldom. But now, I believe, "we have changed all that."

REMINISCENCES

smoothly since his accession to office; he was now seventy-two years old, and had felt the worries of the Prime Ministership far more than ever before. The short and inglorious Boer War of 1881, and the struggle in Egypt which led to the bombardment of Alexandria by our fleet, sat heavily upon him, not only because of their results, but also because they were war, and war in every form was detestable to him. I was at the time perfectly satisfied that he did really mean to retire finally on an early day; and I am quite sure that I had good and sufficient reasons for thinking so, and that he thought so himself. This being so, I told him when he questioned me that I was most anxious not to leave him, and was perfectly willing to stay on with him and take my chance, but that if he should think fit to offer me some post in the Civil Service, and should then be still of the same mind as to his own early retirement, I should be willing to accept it. After this, I had not long to wait. Mr. Alfred Montgomery, a Commissioner of Inland Revenue, retired in the summer of 1882; Mr. Gladstone immediately offered me the vacant place, and I, on his repeated assurance that he intended to quit office very shortly, accepted it. It was with the greatest regret that I left him, and I certainly could not have brought myself to do it if I had not thoroughly believed that within a year at most he would have disappeared into private life. No one, I suppose, had better means of judging of the probabilities than I had, and such was the conclusion to which I had come. I little thought that he was to remain in active political life for another twelve years, and to be twice again Prime Minister.

LORD KILBRACKEN

I left Downing Street for good at the end of the Session, went abroad for a month, and took up my new duties in September. I found them very light after my recent experiences, but they were quite enough to occupy my time, and were to me both agreeable and interesting, being closely akin to an important part of the work which I had been doing for Mr. Gladstone as Chancellor of the Exchequer. Algernon West, whom I have already mentioned, had by this time become Chairman of the Board of Inland Revenue; he was an excellent official, thoroughly imbued with the Gladstonian spirit of hard work and devotion to the public interest, and the year that I served under him was to me a very profitable and instructive one. He allotted to me, among other duties, that of attending to the business connected with the working of the Railway Passenger Duty, and, as it happened, Mr. Childers, to whom Mr. Gladstone early in 1883 made over the Chancellorship of the Exchequer, decided to deal with that and other kindred subjects by means of an Act of Parliament. The consequence was the passing of what was known as the Cheap Trains Act, which it was my duty to prepare and get into shape; it had important effects, and with some modifications is still in force.

In the autumn of this year, 1882, as I was afterwards told by Robert Meade of the Colonial Office, who was a great friend and confidant of Lord Granville's, it was proposed, in consequence of our new position in Egypt, to create a special department in the Foreign Office for dealing with Egyptian affairs and with those of certain other dependencies

REMINISCENCES

which were then under Foreign Office control ; and it was intended that I should be at the head of it, with the rank of an Assistant Under-Secretary. The scheme never took effect, and Meade told me of it merely because he thought, quite rightly, that I should take it as a compliment. Lord Granville said nothing to me about it, so far as I remember.

In the winter of 1882-3 I went over from Betteshanger to Walmer to stay for a day or two with Lord and Lady Granville. There had just then been some changes in the Cabinet, and Lord Hartington had gone from the India Office to the War Office. My host had a great passion for bicycles and tricycles, then in their infancy ; and he and I, mounted on a double tricycle—a species of machine long since obsolete—were toiling together up a slight gradient, when he suddenly said to me in his usual abrupt way, interrupted by pantings, for he was rather out of breath : “It’s bad luck for you that Harty-tarty is leaving the India Office ; Sir Louis Mallet is going to resign, and he had made up his mind to appoint you to succeed him.” Now, Sir Louis Mallet was Under-Secretary of State for India, and nothing could have surprised me more than that I should so soon, and at a comparatively early age, be thought of for such an important post. It was annoying, certainly, that I should have thus missed my chance, but the announcement nevertheless gave me far more pleasure than pain, as it showed that others besides Mr. Gladstone and Lord Granville, with whom I had had special relations, thought well of me and were prepared to do me a good turn. And, as to this particular good turn, I fancied that I knew of

LORD KILBRACKEN

an incident which might have done something towards bringing it about. A short time before I ceased to be Mr. Gladstone's Private Secretary, and about six months before the time of which I am speaking, Mr. Gladstone had summoned Lord Granville, Lord Hartington, and another Cabinet Minister (I forget who it was) to a conference in his room. Presently they wanted to refer to an important paper bearing on the subject under discussion; Mr. Gladstone rang his bell for me, and, when I appeared, called upon me to produce it. I replied that I had indeed had it, but that he had taken it from me and that it was now in his keeping. He had, I suspect, been slightly warmed and excited by his conversation with his colleagues, and he answered with some vehemence and in most positive terms that I was mistaken; that he had given it back to me. Being perfectly certain of my facts, I stood to my guns, and tried to remind him of the circumstances in which I had given it to him, but he would not listen; he was certain that he had given it back to me, and he spoke rather impatiently. Now, I did not know what he might have done with this particular paper; but I had previously noticed, though he had never told me anything about it, that it was his habit to slip into one of the drawers that he kept locked in his large writing-table papers of a particular kind which he was keeping for reference. When, therefore, he had finished his allocution to me, which almost amounted to a reproof, I said: "If you would allow me to look into that drawer" (pointing to it), "I think I might be able to find it." Perfectly incredulous, and evidently slightly angry, he

REMINISCENCES

produced a key and gave it to me; I opened the drawer, and there, sure enough, was the missing paper. He thanked me, but said hardly a word more in my hearing, and I left the room. The conference lasted rather long, and while it was still sitting I went out to have luncheon with Lady Granville in Carlton House Terrace. Presently Lord Granville came in, and as soon as he had sat down he said: "I have just been listening to a long and excellent speech, by the most eloquent man in England, on the merits of Mr. Arthur Godley as an official." It is difficult not to believe that Lord Hartington, however much he may have been bored by Mr. Gladstone's oration, may nevertheless have been somewhat impressed by its substance, and that this may have had something to do with the intention which he formed, but was unable to carry out, of appointing me to be his Under-Secretary of State.

Lord Kimberley succeeded Lord Hartington at the India Office; nothing further was heard about Sir Louis Mallet's intended resignation, and I, having no reason to suppose that Lord Hartington's opinion of me was shared by his successor, had pretty nearly dismissed the matter from my mind, when I went to spend the month of May, 1883, with my family at Evistones, Lady Northbourne's little house among the Northumberland moors, which she had kindly lent to us. We had a very delightful time there, that country being especially enjoyable in the spring: I quitted it with the greatest regret, leaving my wife and children to follow in a few days; and on reaching London I found awaiting me a letter from Lord Kimberley,

in which to my great surprise he offered me the Under-Secretaryship of State for India. Sir Louis Mallet, he said, was not to retire for three or four months, but if I accepted his offer he suggested that I should during that time attend occasionally at the India Office, have conversations with Sir Louis Mallet and others, see some of the papers, and so prepare myself for my new duties. Whatever I might feel about my fitness for the post—and my sense of my own inexperience and shortcomings was profound—I could not pretend to hesitate, and wrote my acceptance on the following day.

I heard subsequently from Sir Louis Mallet that I had been recommended severally and independently by Lord Hartington, by Lord Northbrook, who as an ex-Viceroy took a special interest in the appointment, and by Sir Louis Mallet himself. Mr. Gladstone had had nothing to do with it, and did not even know of the impending vacancy until my name was submitted to him by Lord Kimberley for his approval.

As soon as my appointment was announced, it was attacked in several Conservative newspapers and in the House of Commons as a job of Mr. Gladstone's. Lord George Hamilton, who was destined afterwards to be my chief at the India Office for a continuous term of eight years and a quarter, put a question in the House about my age, and was reminded, in reply, that I was older by some years than he had been when he first became an Under-Secretary of State. Somebody else, I cannot remember who it was, put down a motion on the subject, and there was every prospect of a

REMINISCENCES

debate. And then came one of the great disappointments of my life. Mr. Gladstone was thirsting for the fray, and had, I am sure, in his mind and on the tip of his tongue a speech which I should have had to get emblazoned in letters of gold, to be handed down as an heirloom to my descendants. He spoke to me several times about it as the days went by, expressing his wish to disburden himself of his views about my fitness for the post. The appointed date drew near, and then, to my everlasting regret, the Conservatives turned tail and withdrew their motion. So I missed my chance of immortality.

CHAPTER VI

DURING the remainder of this summer, 1883, I paid pretty frequent visits, as directed, to the India Office; listened to allocutions from Sir Louis Mallet, who had a remarkable gift of fluent exposition; and read a few blue-books and files of papers which were shown to me for my instruction. But of course I knew very well that little was to be learned otherwise than by practical experience—"à force de forger on devient forgeron." The conversations, however, that I had with Lord Kimberley did as much for me as anything could do, short of actual work in the office. In many respects my career has been a fortunate one, but in few more fortunate than in the circumstance of my beginning my duties at the India Office under his auspices. Mr. Gladstone was the best official that I have ever known, but Lord Kimberley was a good second, and after him comes a perceptible interval. He had had immense experience of the most varied kind, and had fully profited by it; there were few social, economical, or political questions to which he had not given long consideration, and he was extraordinarily quick, shrewd, and businesslike in the application of his knowledge to his official work. As a draftsman I have hardly known his equal; and Mr. Gladstone, who had a great admiration for him, used to say very

REMINISCENCES

truly that although in conversation he was too prolix, on paper he never wasted a word. His wide knowledge, his readiness and accuracy, his courage and self-confidence, and his remarkable gift of fluent speech, made him, as I have been told, a most powerful member of every Cabinet in which he sat; and I can well believe it. His flow of conversation was no doubt excessive,¹ and was the subject of many jokes, and of some serious complaints; but what he said was always exceedingly well worth listening to; and it is curious that, having all the gifts which I have mentioned, he should have been, as he was, comparatively ineffective as a public speaker on platforms. During his last term of office he was once talking to me about his probable disappearance from politics, and said, "The only wonder is that I, who am quite useless as a public speaker, should have kept afloat so long." But this was the utterance of his modesty; to anyone who knew anything about his value in a Government, the fact was not at all wonderful. In the House of Lords he was by no means ineffective, and when, towards the end of his career, it fell to his lot to be the leader of that assembly, I understand that by the consent of all parties he performed his task remarkably well. He held the Secretaryship of State for nearly two years

¹ He was himself well aware of his own failing. Lord Burghclere told me that Lord Kimberley, getting on to the subject of an ancestor of his who had fought at Agincourt, and of whom Burghclere had spoken with interest, held forth for an hour—literally an hour—without a pause. At the end of that time he looked at the clock, stopped suddenly, and said with a laugh, "You brought it on yourself."

LORD KILBRACKEN

after I joined the India Office; came back to us in Mr. Gladstone's short administration of 1886, and again, for a couple of years, in 1892. Under a somewhat hard and incisive manner, he partially concealed a kind heart and strong affections; it was impossible to work with him without becoming fond of him, and when, in 1894, he reluctantly took a final leave of us to go to the Foreign Office, a good deal of genuine emotion was displayed on both sides.

Bertram Currie, a member of the Council of India, was his first cousin; and from him I had a story which was characteristic of Lord Kimberley's good humour and good sense. He had, as Secretary of State, issued invitations for the Birthday Dinner, a grand affair, which in his time always took place in the Council Room at the India Office, the substance of the feast being provided by contractors; and his cousin, who regarded this ceremony as a duty rather than a pleasure, was anxious to be excused, and, knowing that his host was strict about official etiquette, went to him, not without fear and trembling, and explained at some length his reasons for wishing to decline, ending with the hope that his unwillingness might not be taken amiss. Lord Kimberley heard him patiently, and, when he had finished, answered promptly: "My dear fellow, you save me two pound ten."

At the beginning of October, 1883, I took possession of the room which was destined to be my official home for twenty-six years, and entered upon my new duties. I had the advantage of being able to take over Sir Louis Mallet's Private Secre-

REMINISCENCES

tary, Colin Campbell, who, though he was about four years younger than I was, had been with me both at Rugby and at Balliol. He knew the routine of the work thoroughly, and was of great use to me. One of the first things that I did was to write a short letter of thanks to Lord Hartington, regarding him as the real author of my appointment, though it had fallen to Lord Kimberley to complete it; and I was glad to notice that in his reply he implicitly accepted the responsibility, for there were few to whom I would rather have owed my promotion.

The constitution of the India Office is a peculiar one, and it is no easy matter to master either the letter of the law, or the way in which the law is practically worked; these two subjects being, as is generally the case in English institutions, quite distinct and independent of each other. Though I had every advantage, it took me a long time to understand and know them, including, as they did, the ever-recurring question of our relations with the Government of India. The India Office, moreover, differs from all the other public offices, with the exception of the Colonial Office, in having no special subject or group of subjects allotted to it; it is concerned with all the affairs, great and small, of a gigantic Empire, and contains under one roof some eight or nine departments, corresponding respectively to the Treasury, the Board of Trade, the Foreign Office, and so on. The work of all these concentrates itself on the Permanent Under-Secretary, through whom it passes to the Secretary of State and to the Council; and the relations between these more or less independent powers

LORD KILBRACKEN

involve various complications and many possibilities of friction, which sometimes give the Under-Secretary plenty to think about. I remember very well that it was not till about the year 1893, when I had been ten years in the office, that I began to feel that I really knew my work and was at home in it. During my last sixteen years I got through my duties with a certain amount of ease and self-confidence which during my first ten years I never felt.

The Council, when I first knew it, was a larger body than it now is, and contained a good many illustrious individuals; the standard was certainly then very high. Sir Henry Rawlinson, Sir Robert Montgomery, Sir Frederick Halliday—these and others were great Indian names, some of which carried one back to the days of the Mutiny. But for real influence in the work of administration, three men stand out in my memory among those who were in the Council at that time.

The first of these was Sir Henry Maine. He was a man of world-wide reputation, having written a series of epoch-making books, and having done a great work during his seven years as Legal Member of Council in India. Intellectually he was a giant; I have hardly ever known anyone who gave me such an impression of the power and grasp of his mind. Like Mr. Gladstone, he would sometimes, when he was talking to me in my room, get interested in his subject, and, with great emphasis, and in an unnecessarily loud voice, deliver a speech which, if it had been taken down, would have been an appreciable addition to the sum of human thought. In Council he rarely spoke, but when he

REMINISCENCES

did so, always with the same thunderous voice and commanding air, he invariably convinced everybody and carried his point. His knowledge, his sagacity, his insight were wonderful, and they were by no means confined to questions of law. I came to know him well, though not intimately, and liked him very much, although in conversation, strange to say, he suffered from a species of nervousness which I sometimes found to be for the moment infectious. He was certainly a timid man, both personally and in public affairs, and he was, from the official point of view, inclined to indolence. It was often difficult to get him to read papers, or to take part in the discussion of subjects on which his opinion would have been most valuable; and his tendency to suffer from nervous worry and over-anxiety was especially noticeable when measures were under consideration which might conceivably provoke public criticism. I remember a question of this kind which affected him so much that I verily believe it did something towards hastening his end. He had accepted the Mastership of Trinity Hall at Cambridge, while retaining his membership of Council; he then proceeded further to accept a Cambridge Professorship of Law; and now the University authorities, who had reckoned on his becoming a resident at Cambridge, began to murmur when they saw that he gave no sign of leaving the Council of India. Upon this Maine was immediately thrown into a pitiable state of worry and anxiety by the prospect of public comments on his position as a pluralist. I was a good deal mixed up in the affair, as some of the Cambridge people were friends of mine, and Maine spoke and wrote

LORD KILBRACKEN

to me at great length about his troubles. He even suggested that I should act as a sort of arbitrator between him and the University, an office which I should have been most unwilling to undertake; but the necessity for a decision did not arise, for, when the question had reached this stage, Maine died. His health was always shaky, and at the time I remember I had no doubt but that his distress of mind had seriously affected it for the worse.

General Sir Richard Strachey, of the Royal Engineers, was probably, in a quiet way, the most influential member of Council during the whole of the time that he remained with us. In intellectual power he did not approach Maine, but his knowledge, his industry, and his energy were unbounded, and there were few matters connected with India in which he did not take a genuine and hearty interest. His two principal subjects were Public Works and Finance; in both of these he was an expert, and I am inclined to think that to him is due the honour of having first started in a practical form the idea of placing the rupee upon a gold basis, which was done, to the immense advantage of India and in a less degree of the world at large, between 1893 and 1900. There was no part of the work of the India Office on which his opinion was not of the highest value, and India owes him a debt which is, indeed, known to be great, but is far greater than it is known to be. I remember that, when he retired, I suggested in a private letter to him that an appropriate reward for his services to India, extending as they did over half a century, would be a peerage, a grant of £500,000, and a statue; and I do not think I put it at all too high.

REMINISCENCES

I will say here that, when I went to the India Office in 1883, everyone in it was acutely conscious of the effects of the great Indian famine of a few years before, which had produced a deep impression on the official mind, as well it might. A Royal Commission had enquired into the best means for preventing its recurrence, and had reported, very sensibly, in favour of railway extension; the great difficulty on such occasions being, not to find food, but to convey it to the places where it is wanted. The number of railway miles then open in India was about 10,500, and it was said that an addition of 10,000 miles, making about 20,000 in all, if well planned and distributed, ought to make us fairly safe. I can truthfully say that, partly in consequence of this report, but much more for reasons of general expediency, I never lost an opportunity, while I was at the India Office, of pressing on and encouraging the construction of railways. There was a strong inclination on the part of the Council, who by law were supreme in all matters of expenditure, to be parsimonious and to higgler over unimportant details in the making of contracts with railway companies. The consequence was that a large part of my time and attention was occupied by questions of railway construction and by the negotiations which it involved; and there is no part of my work to which I look back with more satisfaction or more certainty that, so far as it went, it was useful. We did not do as much as I could have wished, but the mileage increased, while I was Under-Secretary, from 10,500 to 31,500, an average addition of 800 miles a year; I believe the total is now over 35,000. And, mainly if not wholly

LORD KILBRACKEN

by reason of this increase, serious famines seem now to be a thing of the past. In this great work General Strachey played a most important part, always sound and sensible, though not always, in my opinion, quite as ready as he might have been to take large views and to give up small immediate advantages for the sake of great future benefits.

About Bertram Currie, the last of the trio, I feel that I cannot write impartially; he became an intimate friend of mine, and for thirteen years I saw a great deal of him. He was nineteen or twenty years older than I was, and when I first knew him had already been for some years the guiding spirit of the great firm of Glyn, Mills, and Currie, bankers in Lombard Street. Lord Hartington, when he was Secretary of State, had decided to bring a City man on to the Council, and Bertram Currie had consented to serve on the understanding that he was still to regard the business of the Bank as his first object. He managed, however, to give ample time to India Office work, in which he became deeply interested, confining himself chiefly, though by no means exclusively, to financial affairs. He served as a member of Council for fifteen years, during the last eight or ten of which he was chairman of the Finance Committee, and in that capacity virtually controlled the finances of India, which of necessity are mainly managed in London. He was brilliantly clever, keen, and courageous, and his mastery of financial questions was comparable to that of Mr. Gladstone, who had the highest opinion of his abilities. Fortunately for India and for the United Kingdom he was our most influential adviser at the time of the great struggle between the bimetallists

REMINISCENCES

and the advocates of the gold standard; and the victory of the latter was largely owing to Bertram Currie. Next to his financial insight, his most remarkable gift was his command of words, and of a fluent, lucid, and forcible style, both in oral intercourse and on paper, which was most apparent, perhaps, when he was dealing with difficult questions of currency or political economy, but hardly less so in ordinary conversation, or on the rare occasions when he was called upon to make a public speech. He had a delightful sense of humour, and I have hardly ever known a more agreeable companion; when he drove me down to dine and sleep at his villa at Coombe I used to be in his company, with hardly a break, for five or six hours: during that time his flow of conversation was nearly continuous, and at the end of it, though the test was a severe one, I invariably had the sensation of having been thoroughly interested and amused from first to last. He was, I think, generally regarded as one of the first men in the City of London, though he did not share the political opinions prevalent among its citizens; and the part which he played in averting a catastrophe during the so-called "Baring crisis" of 1890 will long be remembered in the annals of banking. His term of office as a member of Council came to an end in 1895, and he died at the end of the following year. It is pleasant to reflect that his only surviving son has now not only succeeded to his leading position in the great Bank that bears his name, but has also had the high honour of becoming, like his father, a member of the Council of India, and is at this moment (1916) chairman of the Finance Committee.

LORD KILBRACKEN

Although I was appointed to the India Office from outside, and was much younger than all my most important subordinates, I was received with great kindness, and was soon on friendly terms with all those with whom my work brought me in contact. At first I had dreams of having some personal acquaintance with the whole staff, but I soon found that this was both impracticable and undesirable, and that it was better merely to let it be understood that one was always accessible and ready to listen to grievances. I had an excellent friend, adviser, and supporter in the Assistant Under-Secretary, Sir Horace Walpole, who had been appointed to that post just before I joined, and retained it till his retirement in 1907. Next to him, the colleague who first occurs to my mind is Sir Henry Waterfield, a truly remarkable specimen of a public servant. He was an able man, but his industry was greater than his ability; he seemed to live entirely for his official duties, came to the office very early, stayed very late, and took masses of work away with him to be done at home. He lived in Bayswater, and many a time I have met him in one of the Parks walking rapidly to or from the office, his eyes fixed on a blue-book or a file of papers which he read as he walked. The amount of work, and especially of writing, which he managed to get through was a standing marvel to me, but of course he would have been far better advised to leave much of it to subordinates. He was for more than twenty years a most efficient and useful though not a brilliant head of our Finance Department, and he fills a large space in my recollections of official life. But there were many more, some of them distinguished and

REMINISCENCES

interesting men, such as Sir Edward Bradford, afterwards Chief Commissioner of the London Police, and Sir Charles Bernard, an old Rugbeian, who had governed Burma during a period of danger and difficulty—with these and with many others it was a pleasure to be associated, and I may say once for all that my relations with my colleagues during the whole of my term of service were to me most agreeable, and I hope not less so to them. I will not attempt to name them all, but I must mention the special satisfaction which it gave me to welcome my old Rugby friend, Sir William Lee-Warner, when after a long and distinguished career in India he was appointed Political Secretary at the India Office. I never knew anyone more zealous or more untiringly energetic, not only in his official work but in every cause that could conduce to the welfare of India. He subsequently became a member of Council, and his death, which happened very soon after the expiry of his term of office, was largely caused by the excessive strain which he had for so many years imposed on himself. And I should be ungrateful indeed if I did not refer to my Private Secretaries, from whom, not forgetful of Mr. Gladstone's example, I believe I managed to get the maximum of help ; at least, I hope I did, for such was certainly my intention, and such ought to be the intention of every highly-placed official in the public service. Most people will agree to this, but not everyone who agrees will know how to do it.

I have mentioned in the text three of my Private Secretaries, Campbell, Ritchie, and Drake, all now dead. To these I wish to add the names of Arthur Hirtzel, J. E. Ferard, J. E. Shuckburgh, and L. D.

LORD KILBRACKEN

Wakely. These four all now (1916) hold more or less high positions in the India Office, and I hope they know how highly I appreciate the help that they gave me, and with what pleasure I recall my relations with them. Few, indeed, among my contemporaries can have been so uniformly fortunate in this respect as I was.

Of the members of Council who joined during my tenure of office I shall at this point mention only one, Sir Alfred Lyall. Like Sir Henry Maine, whom he succeeded, he was when he came to us already a man of wide reputation, not only on account of his brilliant Indian career, but still more by reason of his literary works, his poems (for he was undoubtedly a poet), and his great social gifts. His presence in the India Office added perceptibly to the interest of our daily round, and his penwork was so good that it was always a pleasure to read it; in the delicate art of drafting despatches he was a past master, and I thought myself lucky whenever I could get him to undertake a task of that kind. But this was not always possible, for, again like his predecessor, he was not very apt to undertake unnecessary work, and his position as a member of Council enabled him to pick and choose. In guiding and influencing the policy of the Office he was powerful and sagacious, but he would have been still more useful if he had not suffered from a morbid inability to make up his mind and commit himself boldly and unreservedly to one of two alternative courses. This weakness of his was well known in India, and certainly did not decrease during the years that he spent with us. In debate and discussion he was always interesting and

REMINISCENCES

generally effective; but he would sometimes argue merely for the sake of a petty dialectic victory, and would occasionally import an unnecessary amount of heat into our otherwise peaceful deliberations. I remember an amusing situation, when he attacked me with what I thought excessive vehemence, at a meeting of one of our committees, for what he imagined to be a technical breach of the constitution of the Office; and the fun of the thing was that he was himself unconsciously committing an undoubted breach of the constitution by being present at that meeting and taking part in the discussion; he had no right to be there, and, if I had spoken a word, he would have had to leave the room. Needless to say, however, that the word was not spoken. I liked him much, and, in the calmer mood which was habitual to him, greatly enjoyed his company. Few, indeed, could fail to do so, for he possessed in a high degree the indefinable gift of charm, and the little demonstrations to which I have alluded were, I believe, strictly confined to office hours.

I will record here that when I had been less than a year at the India Office, I was told by my friend Frederick Verney that his aunt, Miss Florence Nightingale, who lived in the house of his father, Sir Henry Verney, in South Street, wished to see me. I went accordingly. She was then and had long been an invalid, and I was shown up to her bedroom, where I found her lying on a sofa, surrounded by stacks of papers and blue-books. She was about sixty-four years of age, and, although she looked much older, I never met any lady who seemed to have her wits about her more thoroughly. After a few words of greeting she told

me that she wished to talk to me about the sanitary measures that were required in India for the benefit of the troops and of the native inhabitants. This she did, at great length and with perfect fluency, for a good deal more than an hour. It was a most interesting experience. I already knew enough to be aware that she was mistaken as to some of her facts, and that several of her proposed measures were impracticable, but I need hardly say that I did not interrupt her, and I was immensely impressed by her enthusiasm, her complete self-confidence, and what might be called her gift of ascendancy. She spoke as one having authority, and since that day I have been well able to understand the secret of the unbounded influence which she exercised so beneficially during the Crimean War and in the years that followed it.

I served at the India Office under ten successive Administrations, but, owing to re-appointments, under only seven different Secretaries of State. Of Lord Kimberley I have already spoken. His successor, Lord Randolph Churchill, who came to us in 1885, was the most interesting of the lot, and, taking him all round, was from the official point of view perhaps as good as any of them except Lord Kimberley; to say this is to praise him highly, but I think it is true. When it became known that he was to come to the India Office I received many condolences from my friends, for at that time he was known to the public only as an ultra-Conservative, who had brought himself into notice by a system of violent speeches, obstruction in the House of Commons, and personal attacks on Mr. Gladstone. This did not seem promising for his relations

REMINISCENCES

with Mr. Gladstone's ex-Private Secretary; but I was not in the least alarmed, for I was aware of the taming and moderating effect of accession to office, and I had known him at Oxford quite well enough to be sure that we should be on friendly terms. And my expectations were completely fulfilled; he was from the first most civil, considerate, and agreeable, and I was heartily sorry when he left us after a brief stay of six or seven months. When his son, Winston Churchill, was writing his *Life*, he applied to me for information about the India Office period, and I supplied him with the matter which appears in the book. Some of it is given as a quotation from my memorandum, but there is a good deal more which, with my knowledge and consent, he incorporated into his narrative without quotation marks: and I do not propose to repeat it here. Lord Randolph's three chief characteristics were, first, remarkable quickness and cleverness, combined with a fund of excellent common sense; second, an ample supply of that rare quality, political courage; and, third, what is equally rare, complete straightforwardness, sincerity, and absence of every kind of humbug and imposture. This last quality is, like courage, as valuable as it is rare, and in official relations it is quite priceless. He was, of course, perfectly ignorant of administrative business, and of Indian matters in particular, when he came to us: he never for a moment pretended that it was otherwise, but he learned with extraordinary rapidity, and when he had been in office a couple of months was already well in the saddle. In the narrative quoted by his son I have related how, when some important financial matter

came up for discussion, he told me that he was going to ask Arthur Balfour to come over from the Treasury to help him, "for about these things I am as ignorant as a calf." And again, when he and I, a short time after he had left us, were sitting as guests at some dinner (I forget where), he called out to me across the table in the course of a financial discussion, "Let me see—when I was at the India Office, was I a bimetallist?" Candour such as this is, to the official mind, unspeakably refreshing. His manner of dealing with the Council, both individually and collectively, was, as I have said in the memorandum quoted in the Life, most judicious and successful; and, judging by what I had seen of him at close quarters, I most heartily regretted his lamentable collapse and disappearance, which took place a year or two after his departure from the India Office. I may mention in passing that, when he was Secretary of State, and Lord Harris and I were his Under-Secretaries, I was the oldest of the three, and I was thirty-eight.

Omitting Lord Kimberley, my next chief was Lord Cross. He was, like me, a Rugbeian, and I mention the fact in order to allude to his eldest son, W. H. Cross, whom I had examined in the Sixth Form at Rugby, about ten years before. I think of him, both as a schoolboy and in later years as one of the best all-round specimens of a young Englishman in appearance, manner, intellect, and character that I have ever met; I remember saying at the time of his death that, if one had wanted to send a representative of the race to a competitive international show, he was perhaps the first man one would have thought of. He became a barrister,

REMINISCENCES

was elected at a very early age M.P. for a division of Liverpool, made a most favourable impression in the House of Commons, and died, while his father was at the India Office, of typhoid fever. I have known few people who, on a comparatively slight acquaintance, have more strongly impressed themselves on my memory. Between father and son it was difficult to discern much likeness. Lord Cross had been a successful barrister and banker, and had served with credit as Home Secretary in two Conservative Governments. He had thus accumulated a good deal of useful experience and possessed plenty of common sense and sagacity; but he seemed to have taken the India Office without any particular enthusiasm, and seldom did any work that he was not obliged to do. He was, when he came to us, a very pleasant, kindly old gentleman, perfectly capable of doing all that was required of him; and, with the help of the official machine, which he left pretty much to itself, he got through his six years at the India Office well enough, and was throughout that time on excellent terms with all its inmates.

Again omitting a two years' tenure of office by Lord Kimberley, I come to Mr. Fowler, who afterwards became Lord Wolverhampton. He was certainly not in the first class as a statesman, but he possessed some very useful qualities in an exceptional degree, and I personally should rate him higher than, I suppose, most of his contemporaries would be inclined to do. He was a remarkably good Parliamentarian, knew the House of Commons thoroughly, and could gauge very accurately its probable feelings on any given subject. In

judging individual members, taking their measure and estimating their importance, he was very skilful, and this accomplishment was of great use to him. He was also a capital speaker, and scored in 1895 the greatest personal Parliamentary triumph that I can remember. An import duty had, with the consent of the Cabinet at home, been placed by the Government of India, for purposes of revenue, upon cotton goods: public opinion in India was unanimous in its favour, but Lancashire, of course, disliked it, and a Liberal revolt was organized, which, with the help of the bulk of the Conservative party, seemed likely to turn the Government out. It was thought that the division would be a very near thing, and that it might quite possibly put them in a minority. In these unpleasant circumstances Fowler rose to defend the action of the Indian Government, for which he had made himself responsible, and delivered an admirable speech, carrying the House with him, and undoubtedly changing a large number of votes: the result was a big majority for the Government, which by common consent was owing to Fowler's spirited oration. Having thus distinguished himself, he immediately took to his bed with a bad attack of influenza: if it had come on twenty-four hours sooner, the Government would very possibly have fallen.

It was while he was thus incapacitated, and when he was at his worst, that we received from India the news that a British force was besieged by hostile tribes in Chitral, and was in great danger of being captured and massacred. An urgent telegram came from the Viceroy, asking permission to send a

REMINISCENCES

strong force at once to relieve them. At that moment Fowler was too ill to have any business whatsoever put before him ; but I, having discussed the matter with him when the danger was not yet imminent, was in possession of his views and wishes, and knowing that a delay of only a few hours might mean the destruction of a considerable British force, authorized the immediate despatch of a telegram in the Secretary of State's name, giving the necessary permission. It should be explained that all official telegrams to India are sent in the name of the Secretary of State, though the great majority, being on matters of routine or of slight importance, are never seen by him, and are authorized by the Under-Secretary acting on his behalf. This particular telegram, being of great importance, should as a matter of course have been seen and approved by him personally in ordinary circumstances. I should not have done this if I had not known Fowler's mind and felt certain of his approval ; and I preferred taking the responsibility of sending the telegram without his previous sanction to that of causing so much as an hour's delay. As it was, I took care that same evening, when Fowler was a little better, to obtain his oral approval, and, a day or two later, to get his initials on paper. Hardly had I done this when I was summoned by the leader of the party in the House of Commons, Sir William Harcourt, to his room in the House of Commons. He suspected, not without reason, that I had taken on myself some share of responsibility for a measure which put the Liberals in the position of approving a "little war," and without much preliminary conversation he began a

vehement harangue, delivered with every appearance of anger, which took the form of a strong reprimand. But I knew enough of him and his manners and customs to take it very quietly; and I did not utter a word, except that, when he paused for breath, I said, "I think, when you look into it, you will find that what I did was fully approved by the Secretary of State." I repeated this when, having finished his bombardment, he dismissed me; and of course, when he followed the matter up, Fowler, who had no special affection for him, took me completely under his wing, and told Harcourt, in official language, to mind his own business.

It may be said that, in the circumstances which I have described, my own Secretary of State not being available, I ought to have consulted some other member of the Cabinet, before authorizing the despatch of the telegram in question. No doubt I might have done so, and should have done so, if my chief wish had been, not to save the lives that were in danger, but to shelter myself from responsibility. But, on the one hand, I knew pretty well what Fowler would have done if he had been at the office; and on the other hand I knew that, if I consulted some other Secretary of State, I should have had first to find him, then to wait till he was ready to see me, and then to explain all the circumstances to him, after which he would almost certainly have wished to consult some of his colleagues or the Prime Minister; a process which would have meant a delay of some hours, and probably the loss of a day in India, where the official day ends about noon by English time. Between these two alternatives I could not hesitate.

REMINISCENCES

I may mention that I had, a few months previously, in company with Fowler, attended a meeting in the Chancellor of the Exchequer's room in the Treasury, at which the other persons present were Lord Spencer, First Lord of the Admiralty, and one of the Naval Lords, Welby, and of course Harcourt himself. The subject for discussion was the defence of India by the Navy and the amount of the Indian contribution towards its cost. Hardly had we taken our seats when Harcourt began to hold forth, abusing us all, Admiralty, India Office, and Treasury (for he did not spare his own department), in unmeasured language and at considerable length. Lord Spencer and Fowler evidently chafed under it, but, knowing whom they had to deal with, said hardly a word, until he had expended his ammunition. The conversation then at once became general; common sense, good temper, and good manners reasserted themselves, and the business was soon settled. As Fowler and I walked back to the India Office he said to me, "From this experience you may form a very good idea of what a meeting of the Cabinet is like."

I must add in a parenthesis that I knew Sir William Harcourt in private life, and liked him much; he was an agreeable and amusing companion, perfectly friendly and civil, and a very kind uncle to my eldest daughter, who was married to his nephew, Henry Rice. It was only in his official relations that his zeal outran his discretion.

Fowler's successor, Lord George Hamilton, stayed with us eight years and a quarter, from 1895 to 1903; and he might have stayed two years longer if he had not, with some others of Balfour's

LORD KILBRACKEN

Cabinet, resigned in the autumn of 1903, unnecessarily as I ventured to think. But I fancy he was tired of office and glad of a rest; in fact, all the Ministers were by that time tired men, and it would have been better for them and for the country if they could have made their general exit at that time. I never worked under a pleasanter chief, and he was a thoroughly efficient head of the Office, understanding the art of devolution, but keeping a firm hand on the reins, and doing thoroughly any piece of work that he personally took up. He had twice served as First Lord of the Admiralty, and it was under his guidance that the great renaissance of the Navy took place in 1889 and the next few years, followed by what he himself considered his most important achievement, namely, the reform of the dockyards. If he had accomplished nothing besides these two measures, which gave us a sure hold of our naval supremacy, then slipping away from us, he would have deserved a high place among the administrators of his time. His work at the India Office was very useful, though for the most part not showy: but it was under his auspices that the great measure for the reform of the Indian currency, initiated under Lord Kimberley, was finally got into shape, completed, and set to work.

It was during Lord George's Secretaryship of State, in the year 1899, that Lord Curzon, who a few years before had been my Parliamentary colleague at the India Office, became Viceroy of India. The relations between the Secretary of State and the Viceroy are peculiar, and, if they are to be maintained on an agreeable footing, it is very

REMINISCENCES

desirable that both of those high officials should be endowed with an adequate amount of tact and of what Matthew Arnold called "sweet reasonableness." For in India the Viceroy is a sublime autocrat, ruling a population of three hundred millions, and yet he is under the thumb of the Secretary of State, who has absolute power over him, can dismiss him, and is responsible to Parliament not only for his own actions but for those of the Viceroy. It will be seen that the situation is a difficult one. In the autumn of 1903 Lord George Hamilton was succeeded by St. John Brodrick, now Lord Midleton, who had been more intimate with Curzon than Lord George had, was trustee of his marriage settlement, and so forth; but this intimacy turned out to be by no means an unmixed advantage. I had known Curzon for many years, had had him as a colleague at the India Office; had exchanged weekly letters with him ever since he became Viceroy, and had acquired a most sincere admiration for his very remarkable gifts. He was wonderfully well equipped for political success: he had a first-rate intellect, immense energy and industry; a genius for detail, a copious supply of fluent speech, and a most hearty and unfeigned interest in himself and his own career. He longed for power and pre-eminence, and was sincerely anxious to use them for what he believed to be good purposes; but he was equally anxious that his good deeds should be fully and conspicuously recognized. At no period of his life did he make the mistake of underrating himself, least of all when enjoying his fifth or sixth year of pomp and power in the East: he had by this time become intolerant of opposition, and,

no doubt, believed that in his dealings with an old friend, whom he thought he could influence and perhaps overbear, in the office of Secretary of State, he would be able to do pretty much what he pleased. In this, however, he was disappointed. It was not long before there were signs of strained relations between Curzon and the Government, chiefly about India's foreign policy; and the climax came when, on the initiative of Lord Kitchener, then Commander-in-Chief in India, the question of abolishing the military membership of the Viceroy's Council was raised. I have no intention of giving the details of this acrimonious controversy; it is enough to say that Curzon had committed himself to the opposite view; between him and Kitchener no love was lost; personal feeling ran high on both sides; and the proposal was sent home with very strong expressions of opinion, for and against, from the two contending parties. Brodrick referred the matter to a Committee, of which he was Chairman, and among others Lord Roberts and Sir George White, both ex-Commanders-in-Chief in India, were members; I acted as Secretary. Their report was unanimous in favour of Kitchener's proposal, the Secretary of State in Council decided accordingly, and his decision was confirmed by the Cabinet. On this Curzon declared war. He turned what had been an official dispute into a personal quarrel; ceased to correspond privately with the Secretary of State or with anyone else at the India Office, thereby making the government of India impossible, and shortly afterwards, when Brodrick very wisely refused to appoint a nominee of his (Curzon's) to the Viceroy's Council (the

REMINISCENCES

appointment being in the hands of the Secretary of State), resigned the Viceroyalty. It was an unpleasant episode, and I am sorry to think that I was inevitably more or less mixed up in it: but this was, I believe, the only occasion, during my thirty-seven years of official life, on which I was drawn, however slightly, into the ignoble atmosphere of personal animosities and ill-feeling.

The mention of Kitchener as Commander-in-Chief reminds me of an interesting visit that I had from him just before he went out to India. He arrived suddenly one afternoon, sent in his name, and asked if I would see him. This was, I think, the first occasion on which I had any conversation with him. He came in and sat with me for about an hour, talking chiefly about the duties of the post which he was going to take up, and other matters incidental to it. Just before he departed we somehow got on to the subject of the War Office, which was then an object of much criticism as a consequence of the Boer War; and I said, half in joke, that when he came back from India he ought to be sent there to reform it. He took my remark very seriously, and said at once, "I hope I shall never be asked to do anything of the kind; I should particularly dislike having anything to do with the inside of the War Office." I remembered this when he became Secretary of State for War in August, 1914; but he then had matters to think about which were more urgent than the domestic reforms which had seemed so desirable eleven or twelve years before.

With Brodrick my own relations were most agreeable throughout the two years that he spent with us. My recollection of his term of office is, at

LORD KILBRACKEN

this distance of time, confined mainly to his relations with Curzon, of which I have just spoken; I shall therefore only add that I remember with great pleasure and with full appreciation the qualities which carried him successfully through a difficult and troublesome time, and the friendliness and confidence with which he uniformly treated his Under-Secretary. I cannot do better than quote the words of Lord George Hamilton, who, writing to me about his successor, said, "I always look upon St. John Brodrick as a very able man. He has great courage, industry, and is not difficult to work with." To this opinion I can readily subscribe, merely adding that I found him not only not difficult, but remarkably easy and pleasant to work with.

His successor, John Morley, soon to become Viscount Morley, who came to us in 1905, was an old acquaintance of mine. It was pleasant and interesting to be in almost daily intercourse with a friend with whom I had much in common, and whose conversation, when he was in the humour for it, was most agreeable to listen to. But he was not always in the humour, for, as his Parliamentary Under-Secretary, J. E. Ellis, said to me in describing him, he was "a man of moods." No truer word was ever spoken, and he had his bad days as well as his good ones. These variations in his temperate were naturally inconvenient, and made him less pleasant as a chief than he ought to have been: he was charming, but there was a sense of insecurity. Of all the Secretaries of State under whom I served he was the most intellectually brilliant, and, though he took to politics rather late in life,

REMINISCENCES

he had speedily raised himself to a conspicuous position; but he certainly was, in my opinion, born to be a thinker and a writer rather than a practical statesman and administrator. He treated me with great confidence, talking to me very openly about secret matters other than those which pertained to our own Office, and my relations with him, as with all his predecessors, were perfectly smooth and satisfactory. He seldom wrote despatches or memoranda, but when he did so they were always admirable, and it was a pleasure to read them, as it was to read the similar writings of Sir Alfred Lyall, merely for the sake of their literary form. And no wonder, for as a writer of the English language he had, in his best days, no superior among his contemporaries.

It is evident that, when the present war comes to an end, large concessions will be made to India, and it will be interesting to see whether the permission to adopt a protective and preferential tariff will be among them; for it is certain that there are few things that public opinion in India more ardently or unanimously desires. Hitherto this has been the measure which the Liberal party—the party which is by way of favouring concessions to India and of consulting Indian opinion—has been most unwilling to permit.

As I look back on my twenty-six years at the India Office, it seems to me that the most important lesson to be learned by anyone who is concerned with Indian affairs, and has not himself lived and worked among the people of India, is the lesson of humility. The difference between the East and the West is profound and all-pervading: “it is

characteristic of sanguine natures," as Oliver Wendell Holmes says, "to believe the contrary." My experience leads me to say that no opinion about Indian administration is worth the paper on which it is written, except in so far as it is, directly or indirectly, founded upon and supported by the opinions of those Englishmen who have spent the best years of their life in actual contact with the people of that country. Of course I am far from saying that the opinion of everyone who possesses this qualification is necessarily a valuable one: quite the contrary. But I say that no one's opinion is valuable unless he either has had that experience, or is willing to be advised and guided by those who have had it. I went into the India Office with most of the prepossessions of an ordinary ignorant Englishman, and with those of a Liberal into the bargain; but it did not take me more than a year or two to learn my lesson, and, if I was of any use during the remainder of the time that I spent there, it was mainly owing to the fact that I steadily tried to act accordingly, and to induce others to do likewise.

I have now spoken of all the Secretaries of State under whom I served. The Parliamentary Under-Secretaries of State who successively became my colleagues were far more numerous; their average tenure of office was not much more than a year and a half. With all of them my relations were very pleasant, and in some cases they became permanent friends. As regards the work of the Office they differed widely: some were most industrious and efficient; others perfectly useless. I will mention two or three of them.

REMINISCENCES

Sir John Gorst was strangely unlike the rest, and his position was peculiar. He was probably one of the very ablest men among the Conservatives of his time, had rendered great services to the party, and was closely allied with Lord Randolph Churchill; consequently, when Lord Salisbury's first Government was formed in 1885, he became Solicitor-General, though I believe he had never had any legal business worth mentioning. The Government lasted about six months; the Liberals then had a short innings, after which another Conservative administration was formed; but on this occasion Gorst, who was never trusted by his leaders, had to be content with a much less lucrative and important post at the India Office: while the Secretary of State, his Chief, was Lord Cross, a man who was inferior to him intellectually, and for whom he entertained a hardly concealed contempt. Lord Cross was obviously rather afraid of him, and, although there was no breach of the peace, this was only because Gorst was allowed to do pretty much what he liked. I remember that on one occasion (that of the Manipur affair) Gorst made a speech in Parliament which was entirely opposed to the views of Lord Cross and of the Cabinet. No rebuke or remonstrance was addressed to him, but next day the Secretary of State for War, Edward Stanhope, appeared suddenly in my room to be coached up in the details of the case, and thenceforward he, a member of the Cabinet, took charge of the matter in the Commons, and Gorst had to take a back seat. Gorst was very industrious, and worked long hours at the India Office, but he was a dark horse, with many undisclosed interests

and undertakings, which occupied probably nine-tenths of his time.

George Russell I had known well, as a friend of the Gladstones, before he came to us in 1892. He, again, was very unlike his predecessors and successors; he was not, I think, born for official work, and his views on political and social subjects seemed to me to be frequently "distinguishable from true wisdom," as the Chinese say. One of the first things that he said to me was, "I go in for *all* the fads," and so he did, and was proud of it. His real vocation was, no doubt, to be a writer, and more especially a journalist; he was exceedingly clever, with a marvellous verbal memory, all his knowledge at his fingers' ends, and a great sense of humour. Almost daily about 11.30 I used to see the door of my room opened very gently, and George Russell's head thrust cautiously in to see whether I was alone; if I was, he would come in, and, standing in front of the fire, discourse most agreeably and amusingly for ten minutes or a quarter of an hour without the smallest reference to official matters. Then, just before going back to his room, he would perhaps ask some question about the business of the day, and depart well satisfied. I remember one occasion (I do not mean that it was the only one) on which he did a good stroke of work. A man who had been condemned to death in India appealed for mercy to the Home Government; neither the Viceroy who sent home the petition nor anyone else had anything to say in his favour, and the appeal would certainly have been rejected if George Russell had not discovered and brought before Lord Kimberley a reason—I forget what it was—

REMINISCENCES

for a reprieve. The Secretary of State in Council decided accordingly, and Russell thereupon turned to me, and, as we sat next to each other in the Council Room, told me the story of the lunatic who entered in his diary (after the date), "Very fine hot day; in the afternoon, killed a little girl," and expressed his intention of making in *his* diary a similar entry, only substituting the words, "Saved a man's life"—which he certainly had done.

George Curzon was my colleague as a member of Lord Salisbury's Government from 1890 to 1891. I have already spoken of him as he was in 1905. But I wish to add that in an earlier phase, as an Under-Secretary of State, he was excellent: thoroughly interested in his official duties, most efficient as our representative in the House of Commons, and in every way agreeable and amusing to work with. Among the most interesting conversations of my life was one that I had with him a few days before he left England to take up the Viceroyalty. I stayed with him in a house that he had taken near Reigate; he had no other guest; Lady Curzon (his first wife) retired about ten o'clock, and he and I talked about India till two in the morning. I left him next day with a feeling of sincere admiration for his great gifts, and with hopes for the future which were only very imperfectly fulfilled.

Another colleague of mine, who stood, even more markedly than Gorst, Russell, or Curzon, in a class by himself, was Lord Percy, who came to us, at the age of about thirty-two, in 1902, but was, much to our regret, soon transferred to the Foreign Office. Of my many Parliamentary colleagues, no one was

LORD KILBRACKEN

more helpful or more thoroughly efficient: but the pleasure of working with him was only a small part of the greater pleasure of his friendship. He had a real gift for administrative work, and was an effective and successful speaker in the House of Commons; but that was only one side of him, and not by any means the most interesting side. Although he had every qualification for a political career, I have reason to believe that politics were not congenial to him, and that his true interests lay elsewhere. What the result of this conflict might ultimately have been, those who knew him more intimately than I did seem to doubt; but the problem was solved by his early death a few years later.

I was, during my long tenure of office, concerned in a good many interesting and important affairs, but none stands out more clearly in my memory than the establishment of a gold standard in India; a measure about which the public knew little and cared less, but which was nevertheless of the utmost importance not only to India but in a less degree to the world at large. It is difficult now (1916) when the advocates of the gold standard have apparently triumphed in all parts of the world, to realize how strong and bitter was the opposition which they had to encounter in the year 1893, when the struggle began. Lord Kimberley, who was then Secretary of State, appointed a small Committee, with whom the decision virtually lay. The Lord Chancellor, Lord Herschell, was an admirable chairman, and the other members were Lord Farrer, Bertram Currie, Sir Richard Strachey, Lord Courtney, Lord Welby, and myself. We held frequent meetings during a period of seven or eight

REMINISCENCES

months, and examined a large number of witnesses, most of whom were bankers and merchants of various kinds engaged in the Indian trade. The majority of them were opposed to the gold standard, but the remarkable thing was that, with two exceptions to be mentioned hereafter, not one of them seemed to have any real understanding of the matter. Many of them were men of great ability, who had made large fortunes; but they had been content with rule of thumb, and had evidently thought little, if at all, about causes, principles, and problems. After examining a number of men of this kind, it was no small relief to the Committee when Sir James Mackay, now Lord Inchcape, then Chairman of the Calcutta Chamber of Commerce, began to give his evidence. He was a man who had not only been very successful in business, but thoroughly understood the questions at issue, had thought the subject out in all its bearings, and was well able to defend and justify the faith that was in him. His answers were most illuminating and helpful, and undoubtedly affected the Report of the Committee, who were unanimous in favour of the gold standard. The other exceptional witness to whom I have referred was Sir F. Forbes Adam, who, like Mackay, had looked below the surface of his daily work, and understood thoroughly what he was talking about; he subsequently came to be very well known as a man of business in this country. Mackay came home for good soon afterwards, became a member of the Council of India, and in that capacity, as well as in others, rendered signal services to the State, for which, in 1911, he was raised to the peerage. He now (1916) presides

as Chairman over the united Boards of the P. & O. and British India Shipping Companies; and in that situation, controlling one of the largest businesses in the world, he seems to me to be, more nearly than any other person, the true inheritor of the position and renown of the Chairman of the old East India Company.

The nature of my work at the India Office will have been more or less gathered from what I have written. I have no intention of describing it chronologically or in detail. The post which I held is, for a man who has any imagination, perhaps the most interesting and enviable in the public service; and the fact that the India Office, being maintained out of Indian revenues, stands rather apart from the other public offices and is immune for the most part from Treasury interference and control, adds considerably both to its amenity and to its efficiency. But, on the other hand, the large numbers of the staff (for it is a very big affair) entail a correspondingly large number of personal questions, promotions and so forth, than which none are more troublesome; and the control of official expenditure, which as regards other offices is in the hands of the Treasury, in the India Office is in practice exercised mainly by the Permanent Under-Secretary. The responsibility is not a light one, but I had had good training under Mr. Gladstone and his disciples, and I hope and think that we worked on economical lines. Certainly there was no time during the last ten years or so of my tenure of office when I should have feared the result of the most rigid enquiry; but it took some time to bring about this state of things.

REMINISCENCES

The machinery of the Office is unfortunately and perhaps inevitably favourable to delays; but if those at the head of affairs—and I refer especially to the Secretary of State—will only give themselves a little extra trouble, it is perfectly easy to deal promptly with all urgent matters, and I think we generally did so—though not always. As for the amount of business, there is always, for the Under-Secretary, at least twenty-five hours' work to be done in the twenty-four; but if he is a quick worker, is not a long-winded writer, and understands the art of devolution, he need not be afraid of being overwhelmed. It certainly was only on very rare occasions that I took work home to be done in the evening or on Sundays. A very appreciable amount of time is saved by knowing how to condense interviews, to keep the conversation from wandering, and to get rid of one's interviewer when he has said what he has got to say. These arts I practised to the best of my ability, and with a fair amount of success. Professional bores of course require special treatment; of these I always had several on my list, so to speak, and no one system could be applied to all of them. There is a story of a Private Secretary to the Chancellor of the Exchequer who, when the bore paused for breath, used to rise suddenly from his seat with a key in his hand, saying, "Would you like to go out by the Chancellor's private door?" The result, it is said, was always quite satisfactory, and the visitor went away well pleased with himself as one who had enjoyed an exceptional privilege. We, too, had a private door at the India Office, and I have sometimes used this method and formula quite success-

fully. I had one terrible bore—he was a foreigner, but spoke English well—whom I found at first very difficult to deal with; his visits were interminable. But he was rather deaf, and, after delivering himself of an observation or a question, used invariably to half-rise from his chair, and bend forward, with his hand slightly advanced, to catch my reply. One day I waited until he did this a little more decidedly than usual, and then, pretending to think that he was getting up to go, I shook him warmly by the hand and wished him good-bye. He looked a little puzzled and surprised, but went away quite happy, and thenceforward whenever he came I had him at my mercy. But my usual plan, which I found in practice to be an excellent one, was this: in my room I had some large maps of India, mounted on rollers in high frames, which stood about half-way between my desk and the door. It was always easy so to guide the conversation as to bring in a reference to some place in India; I used then to rise from my chair, pull down a map, and search for the name that had been mentioned. My visitor, whoever he might be, invariably rose at the same time and joined in the search; and, once on his legs, he was done for. We never sat down again, and he soon departed.

When I read over what I have written about the India Office, I am very conscious of the vacuum which is caused by my omission of the names of nearly all my colleagues, who for many years played such a large part in my daily life. But a mere list of names would be uninteresting, and to attempt anything more would be to fill many more pages than I can spare within the limits which I

REMINISCENCES

have laid down for myself. There are three, however, whom I shall mention, partly because of my special relations with them, and partly because they have all passed above "the smoke and stir of this dim spot which men call Earth."

The first is that of Field-Marshal Sir Donald Stewart. He came to us as a Member of Council after a very successful term of office as Commander-in-Chief in India, and for many years was supreme in all military matters, and most helpful and efficient in every department of the work of the Office. He was not only a great soldier, but a man of conspicuous all-round ability; he was, for instance, an extremely useful member of our Finance Committee; he had a marvellous memory, and for downright, intimate knowledge of India, the country, the people, and the European element whether civil or military, I never met his equal. In appearance and manner he was (as I have said in a letter, printed in the *Life of Sir D. Stewart*, by G. R. Elsmie) the ideal British officer, and it was impossible to work with him without loving him.

The second name that I must mention is that of Richmond Ritchie, who was about seven years younger than I was; he was a junior clerk when I entered the Office, had had a high reputation at Eton and Cambridge, and was probably the ablest man on the staff. For some years he was Private Secretary to a series of my Parliamentary colleagues, which brought him into close contact with me, as my colleague's Secretary and mine were more or less interchangeable; then for a time he was my Secretary, and soon after leaving me (which he was obliged to do on promotion) he became

LORD KILBRACKEN

Private Secretary to the Secretary of State, Lord George Hamilton. In that capacity he exercised, for seven or eight years, a very marked influence on the work of the Office; Lord George put great confidence in him and made full use of him; and my opinion of the way in which he discharged his duties, both then and afterwards, is sufficiently shown by my having strongly recommended him to Lord Morley as the most fit and proper person to be my successor when I left the Office in 1909. But before that date was reached he had been for about six years Head of our Political Department, which controls our relations with Foreign Governments and Native States; a most important post, in which he did remarkably well. He then succeeded to my place, and held it till his premature death, only three years later. He and I became intimate friends very soon after my appointment to the Office, and my almost daily intercourse with him was to me a constant source of refreshment and amusement. He was an excellent companion, both witty and humorous, and a most congenial spirit. I can see him now, as he used to come into my room; the door would open very slowly, and he would enter, tall, erect, and silent—no smile, no word of greeting—and would advance towards me with extreme deliberation, as grave and solemn as a mute at a funeral. Then he would sit down, and gradually unfold his tale in very short sentences with very long pauses between them, but always thoroughly businesslike and to the point; and, when official matters were disposed of, the conversation would usually take a turn leading to loud and prolonged laughter. His death at a compara-

REMINISCENCES

tively early age was a very real loss to the public service.

The third name that I have in my mind is that of Francis Drake, who came to us as a clerk from Winchester and New College, having done well in the Schools and rowed in the Oxford Eight. Alfred Robinson, the famous New College Tutor, strongly recommended him to me, not only for his intellectual qualities, which were considerable, but also on the ground that he would certainly raise the average of the Office in respect of personal appearance, as indeed he did. For many years he was my Private Secretary, and I shall always remember with gratitude his friendship and sympathy at a time when they were specially valuable to me. After leaving me he rose to a high position in the Office, becoming Head of a Department soon after I had retired, But he did not hold that position long. His only son was smitten early in the year 1914 by an incurable disease, and died after many months of hopeless nursing; and this experience, combined with the very heavy strain thrown upon him by the war, prepared the way for an illness which proved fatal a few months later.

It was and is a great satisfaction to me that I was able to serve practically my whole time in one and the same office, where I came after a time to feel that I knew the work and could be of some real use; but I had some narrow escapes. My theory was that, having enlisted in the Home Civil Service, I was morally bound to accept any post in that Service for which I was in the opinion of the Government the best-qualified person, if I was pressed by them to do so; but that, as to posts

LORD KILBRACKEN

abroad or outside of the Home Civil Service, I was free to act as I pleased. I think it was about 1893, certainly it was at some time when Lord Kimberley was Secretary of State, that the Permanent Under-Secretaryship at the War Office fell vacant. The Office was at that time supposed to be in need of rather drastic reforms; and one day Lord Kimberley sent for me, and after describing what he imagined to be its condition, said, "Would *you* like to try your hand at it?" I replied that I certainly did not wish to leave the India Office, but that it might be put before me as a duty which I could not refuse. We then talked of other matters, and I heard no more about it, to my great relief. Whether he was, as I supposed, speaking on behalf of the Secretary of State for War, or was merely trying an experiment on his own account, I never knew. Something of the same kind happened later on, I think in 1902 or 1903. Lord George Hamilton summoned me to his room, and told me that Mr. Chamberlain, then Colonial Secretary, had asked him to get my advice as to a fit and proper person for the Permanent Under-Secretaryship for the Colonies, which was then vacant or expected to be vacant. I cannot now remember the details of the conversation, but it was such that, when it was over and I had got back to my room, it suddenly occurred to me that possibly what Mr. Chamberlain really wanted to know was whether I should be inclined to take the place myself, and that it had been very stupid of me not to perceive it. I was, however, most thankful that I had *bona fide* failed to take the hint, if hint it was, and I may very possibly have been wrong as to Mr. Chamberlain's inten-

REMINISCENCES

tion : at any rate, nothing more came of it. I should of course have gained nothing by migrating to the War Office or the Colonial Office, except in so far that in each case the vacant post was one of special difficulty, and therefore one of honour ; and on the other hand I should have lost much.

About the same time at which Lord George spoke to me about the Colonial Office vacancy, there was a vacancy in the Council of the Viceroy of India for a Finance Member, and to my great surprise and amusement a letter came to me from Curzon, offering me the post ; the fun consisting in the fact that the appointment was not in the Viceroy's gift, but in that of the Secretary of State. I showed the letter to Lord George, who laughed over it, and told me that I could have the post if I wished for it, but that he hoped I would stay where I was, and I certainly had no idea of doing otherwise.

An offer of a very different kind came at the end of 1904, when I was at Minley for Christmas. Lord Milner's eventful term of office as High Commissioner in South Africa, which covered the whole period of the Boer War, was coming to an end, and there was much speculation in the newspapers and elsewhere as to his probable successor. Alfred Lyttelton was then Colonial Secretary, and I received one morning a letter from him. After referring to the coming vacancy, he used expressions which, when I first glanced through them, I took to mean that he was asking my advice ; this did not seem wholly impossible, as I knew him well, and could not pretend not to think that he might conceivably wish to have my opinion. I could not

LORD KILBRACKEN

believe that he was offering me the High Commissionership of South Africa at such a moment; and yet, when I had read the letter two or three times, I saw that there could be no doubt about it. The words were perfectly clear and explicit, and nothing but my own incredulity had prevented me from grasping their meaning at once. I took forty-eight hours to consider it, but at the end of that time I refused without the smallest hesitation, and I am quite certain that I did what was best in the interest of the public as well as in my own. I knew by this time what I could do and what I could not do, and I was convinced that I should perform indifferently the duties, so unlike what I had all my life been accustomed to, of this most uncongenial post; whereas I hoped I might believe that I was doing useful service where I was, and at any rate I was an old hand at it and knew the ropes. If I had been "out of a job" at home, I should of course have felt bound to accept; as it was, at the age of fifty-seven, having spent twenty-one years in learning the duties which I was discharging to the satisfaction of my employers, I thought myself free to decline, and I have never for one moment regretted having done so.

My last adventure of this kind occurred in the autumn of 1905. Sir Thomas Sanderson, Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign Office, was about to retire, and to my great surprise I heard rumours that I was to be his successor. I treated them with ridicule, but they persisted and became more and more frequent, until at last I began to think that there must be something in them. Finally things came to such a pitch that some of my friends

REMINISCENCES

received letters, and even telegrams, from people in the Diplomatic Service, asking whether it was true that I was to be the new Under-Secretary. Nothing, however, happened so far as I was concerned; and very soon the appointment of Charles Hardinge, then Ambassador at Petrograd, was officially announced. A few days later I took an opportunity, in writing to Lansdowne, then Foreign Secretary, to tell him, for his amusement, how I had been pestered with enquiries, but of course asking no questions and begging him not to answer that part of my letter. He did, however, reply to it, telling me that my name had been very seriously considered, though the final decision had been in favour of a man already in the diplomatic line. This was a real escape, for the change of office would have been most distasteful to me from every point of view, and yet, if it had been put before me as a duty, I should, according to my theory aforesaid, have been bound to accept.

I must mention one other post, namely the Under-Secretaryship for Ireland, for which I know that my name was at least once considered, though it was never offered to me. For this I cannot be too thankful, as there was certainly no post in the Civil Service which I should have disliked so much. In 1882, after the murder of Mr. Burke, who had held that office, the choice of his successor was naturally regarded as a matter of much importance, to be decided by the Cabinet. Before going in to the meeting at which it was to be settled, Mr. Gladstone had discussed the question with various persons, and had reduced the number of possible names to four, which he wrote down on a sheet of

note-paper to take into the Cabinet with him. By some chance I unintentionally saw it on his writing-table just before he went in, though I am sure that he did not mean me to see it, and never, before or afterwards, mentioned the subject to me. The individuals to be considered were Sir Robert Hamilton, Secretary to the Admiralty; my uncle Denis Godley, Secretary to the Irish Land Commission; myself; and a fourth whose name I have forgotten. My relief, when I heard that Sir Robert Hamilton had been chosen, may be imagined, for in the circumstances it would have been impossible to refuse, or even to hesitate. I had another fright in connection with the same post rather more than twenty years later. About the year 1904 Sir Antony Macdonnell, now Lord Macdonnell, was about to retire from the Irish Under-Secretaryship; he had had a dispute with Mr. Balfour's Government which had become more or less public property and had been discussed in Parliament; and it so happened that, as I knew Macdonnell, Mr. Walter Long, who was Secretary for Ireland, had made use of me as a go-between or emissary, and I had been much mixed up in the whole business. Then, when the date of Macdonnell's retirement had been finally fixed, I was suddenly told one afternoon that the Prime Minister wanted to see me. At once I thought of this vacant office, and trembled; but when I was ushered into Mr. Balfour's room and found him alone with Walter Long, my heart sank into my boots, and I gave myself up for lost. I was, however, reassured by the first words that the Prime Minister uttered; the matter about which he wished to see me was something quite different;

REMINISCENCES

and I believe my alarm to have been perfectly groundless, though in the circumstances I do not think it was unreasonable.

I have omitted to mention the fact that when I ceased in 1882 to be Mr. Gladstone's Private Secretary, he recommended me to the Queen for a Companionship of the Bath. At that time I was, foolishly as I now think, determined to avoid if possible all decorations and Orders: perhaps the experience of four years "behind the counter" as a Prime Minister's Private Secretary may have helped to induce that frame of mind. But Mr. Gladstone's offer came so suddenly and unexpectedly and was made in such a way that it was impossible for me to refuse. In 1892 Lord Cross offered me a Grand Commandership of the Order of the Indian Empire, but I at once declined it, not wishing to accept anything of the sort unless it were promotion in the highly respectable Order of the Bath, to which I already belonged. It then turned out that Lord Cross had already taken the Queen's pleasure before he spoke to me about it, and was much taken aback by my refusal, which he feared would annoy the Queen. He left me to get out of it as best I could. At that time my wife's cousin, Daisy Hardinge, now Mrs. Kirkpatrick, was a maid of honour in waiting, and was much in the Queen's company. I wrote to her a carefully-worded letter, begging her, if she had an opportunity, to express my gratitude and regret, etc., etc. I think she showed my letter to the Queen; at any rate, the result was that Sir Henry Ponsonby, the Queen's Secretary, told Algernon West that she had remarked to him that the only individual in the

LORD KILBRACKEN

recent list of "honours" who had expressed any gratitude was the only one who had refused what was offered to him, namely myself. A few months later, early in 1893, I was recommended by Mr. Gladstone for a Knight Commandership of the Bath, and by Asquith in 1908 for a Grand Cross of the same Order.

I remember that Lord Kimberley, speaking about the multiplication of Orders on single individuals, told me this story. Prince Metternich, who towards the end of his life had received almost every European Order, was told one day that the King of Denmark, then visiting Vienna, wished to see him. When he was preparing for the interview, he told his valet as a matter of course to bring him the insignia of the Order of the Elephant, the highest of the Danish Orders. The valet, much perturbed, reported that he could not find it, and Metternich ordered him at once to buy, borrow, or steal another set. This the valet did, and Metternich, conspicuously adorned with the insignia of the Order, presented himself before the King. He then, to his dismay, found that His Majesty had summoned him for the purpose of presenting him with the Order of the Elephant, that being one of the very few European Orders which he had not already received.

CHAPTER VII

I have now said as much as I propose to say about my thirty-seven years of official life, under which head I include the time when I was concerned with political and official work though not yet a member of the permanent Civil Service. Of the circumstances of my retirement from office in 1909 I shall speak hereafter, and something must now be said about my non-official doings during the same period.

In the years that had intervened between 1880 and 1890 we had several times taken a furnished house near London for the summer, at such places as St. George's Hill, Fairmile, and Mickleham; besides which we spent, as before, a good part of every year at Betteshanger. I cannot mention St. George's Hill and Fairmile without referring to the pleasure with which I recall my relations with Matthew Arnold, who lived at Cobham, close by. He was my senior by about twenty-five years, and I never knew him intimately, but we were on very friendly terms; we had Rugby and Balliol in common; many of his friends were also my friends, and I used to meet him pretty often, especially during our sojourn in his neighbourhood. I have seldom met a pleasanter or more interesting companion, and my enjoyment of his society was increased by my consciousness of the great debt that I owed him for his writings, both prose and verse. As for the

LORD KILBRACKEN

verse, I do not believe that I overrate him as a poet; I can see, or think I see, his limitations; but on the whole he appealed to me, during a large part of my life, more strongly than any other living poet, and I firmly believe that much of his work will last. In his everyday manner there was little or nothing suggestive of the poetic temperament, but what struck one was his constant good-humour and cheerfulness, combined with a kind of joyous, boyish, harmless self-confidence and self-satisfaction, which, far from offending, was positively attractive and amusing. I often think of an utterance of his which seemed characteristic, though hardly in keeping with the ordinary conception of the poet's mind and tastes. On a very hot day he and I were walking together from Waterloo Station to Whitehall, and we passed through the tunnel underneath the South-Eastern Railway at Charing Cross Station. The cellars on both sides of it were used as brewers' store-houses, and the aroma from them, in the hot, fusty atmosphere of a London July, was overpowering. I made some complaint of this; but Matthew Arnold did not sympathize with me in the least; he replied, with an indescribable air of cheerfulness and enjoyment, "*I like the smell of beer!*" In April, 1888, I was engaged to meet him at the house of my old friend Dr. Montagu Butler, Master of Trinity; and I remember well the shock and the sorrow with which I heard of his sudden death, a day or two before we were both of us due at Cambridge.

I think it was about the year 1884 that I finally gave up shooting. Up to 1880 I had been keen about it; during the three or four years that

REMINISCENCES

followed I was too busy to shoot more than a few days in each year, and in the course of that time I gradually ceased to enjoy it: nor have I, since about that date, taken any active interest in any game, indoor or outdoor. I had never felt any need of such things, and they have been, since that time, rather irksome to me. I used, however, for many years after that, to be able to enjoy looking on at a Public School or University cricket match; this faculty was kept alive in me mainly by the infectious enthusiasm of my friend Robert Tillard, who during a period of twenty-five years only once missed coming to stay with me for the Oxford and Cambridge match, but it faded at the end of that time. Ever since I was a boy I have been fond of long, solitary walks, as well as of walks not solitary, and they have supplied me with all that I wanted in the shape of exercise and amusement. I was an energetic pedestrian, and used often, for instance, when I was staying at Betteshanger, to walk into Canterbury and back, about twenty-six miles. By means of similar long walks, with the help of occasional lifts in a train or in my father-in-law's dog-cart (there were no bicycles, still less motors or motor-cycles in those days), I had visited over seventy churches in that district of East Kent before my series of long visits to Betteshanger came to an end.

This reminds me to mention my habit of visiting cathedrals and other churches, which for the last forty-four years or so has occupied a large share of my time and thoughts. Ever since 1872 or 1873 I have done this systematically, whenever and wherever it was possible, very rarely missing any reason-

able chance. Although I cannot for a moment pretend to rival such church-hunters as the late Sir Stephen Glynne, who had seen and remembered accurately (this seems incredible, but it is true) the details of nearly every mediæval church in England, I can say that I have seen, besides all the cathedrals (most of them many times) and all the collegiate churches, a great majority of the specially large, interesting, or beautiful parish churches in England and Wales, to say nothing of a host of smaller and less important ones. I used often to make expeditions for this purpose and no other; but, besides this, I almost always arranged, if I had a longish journey before me, to spend a night or two on the way, diverging to any favoured spots that I wished to visit near my line of route. This I still do, though my expeditions of this kind are now fewer, and their character has for many years differed in some important respects from what it used formerly to be.

My travels abroad, since my voyage round the world, have been few, and, such as they were, they were mostly undertaken with a view to seeing the big churches of the Continent. This, of course, does not apply to Switzerland or Holland, and only in a small degree to Paris; but I have seen most of the finest churches in the north of France and in Belgium, and a good many in Italy as far south as Rome. I have travelled in no European country other than those above mentioned, except once, in the year 1867, when I spent two months in the dominions of what are now called the Central Powers, Germany and Austria.

For some years before the time (1890) when we

REMINISCENCES

moved into Ennismore Gardens we had been looking for a country house within easy reach of London, and in the summer of that year we accepted Bertram Currie's offer of the lease of a house of his, Minley Lodge, which stands in a corner of his property and about a mile from his own house, Minley Manor. He offered me a lease of ninety-nine years, but I preferred to take it from year to year, as we already cherished the hope (not to be fulfilled till 1912) of buying a permanent home of our own, and when we went to Minley we did not think we should stay there very long. It was an attractive place with a character of its own, standing in a clearing in a wood, and surrounded by endless tracts of pines and heather; being about two-and-a-half miles from Fleet Station, it had a good service of trains to London, and was in many ways, if not what we wanted, at any rate very convenient and suitable. We ended by staying there twenty-two years. Alternating between Minley and Ennismore Gardens, we were very comfortably housed; we always kept both houses in such a condition that I could sleep at either of them with or without previous notice; and I suppose that few members of the Civil Service can have managed, without scamping their duties, to get a larger number of nights in the year out of town than I did. When my family were settled in London, I used invariably, unless I was engaged elsewhere (which was very seldom the case), to spend Saturday to Monday alone at Minley, and I doubt whether, in the last twenty-six years, I have spent so much as half a dozen Sundays in London.

In other respects our manner of life from 1880 to

LORD KILBRACKEN

1895 went on much as before, except that the number of our friends and acquaintances naturally increased. I think I may say that our social habits were during that time very much like what those of my father and mother had been between 1854 and 1861, as described on a former page, due allowance being made for the changes in manners and customs which the intervention of thirty years had produced. I think also that we lived in very much the same sort of society as they did, political, official, legal, and literary. I used in those days to like dining out in London within reasonable limits, and, still better, to have friends dining with us. Evening parties during the first few years of my married and official life were occasionally unavoidable, but I do not think I have been to one for at least five-and-thirty years.

During the fifteen years between 1874 and 1889 my cousin Charlie Wynne Finch, having left the Scots Guards soon after his father's death in 1874, was living as a bachelor at one or other of his two houses in North Wales, Voelas or Cefmanwlch; and I used often to pay him a *tête-à-tête* visit of a week or so; this was usually at Voelas, where he kept a small establishment and occupied only a part of the house. As I have already said, Voelas had been to me, when I was a boy, a second home; the place itself is very beautiful, and is surrounded by mountains, moors, lakes, and streams; and these periodical visits were to me so enjoyable and in every way so beneficial that I am bound to mention them. He and I had both ceased to care for shooting or fishing, and our days were spent partly in pottering about near the house, which I

REMINISCENCES

believe I enjoyed almost as much as he did, and partly in long walks over the hills, of which I still have a most vivid recollection. I also paid him occasionally similar visits at Cefnamwlch; but he used frequently to lend the house to my mother for the autumn, joining her party himself whenever he felt inclined to do so; and many of my visits there were paid during the time when she and my sisters were in occupation. Voelas is beautiful; but Cefnamwlch, standing within a mile of a fine rocky sea-coast, twelve miles beyond any railway, and in those days absolutely out of the reach of tourists and trippers, had a special and indescribable charm of its own which can never be forgotten by those who knew it in those prehistoric days.

In 1890 my son went to Eton; I had been fortunate enough to get his name entered for Miss Evans' house, and had secured Edward Lyttelton (who was my father's godson) to be his tutor. But, when the time came, Lyttelton had become Head Master of Haileybury, and Lionel Ford, to whom, as well as to Miss Evans, I owe a great debt of gratitude, had taken his place. It is curious that these two men, the tutor whom I chose first and the tutor who took his place when he unavoidably threw me over, should now (1916) be Head Masters of Eton and Harrow respectively.

To my relations with Miss Evans, during the six years that Hugh spent at Eton, I look back with the greatest pleasure. She was a most remarkable person, but it is not for me, a non-Etonian, to sing her praises. Few characters are more impressive and effective than those which combine keen insight, shrewdness, swift decision and strength of will, with

an unusually simple, friendly, unassuming, and almost deprecating manner; and, if this combination is found in a woman, it is even more telling than it is in the other sex. Miss Evans' relations with the boys and their parents were a masterpiece; not as good as a play, but much better. I will give only one instance which comes back to me. She was in some respects rather old-fashioned, with a great contempt for fads, among which she reckoned the modern excess of nervousness about infection. A day or two before the end of the summer holidays, 1894, Hugh had unfortunately slept under the same roof as a person supposed (wrongly, as it turned out) to be suffering from mumps. The circumstances were such that the risk was really *nil*; but strictly speaking I was bound to report it. Accordingly I went at once to Eton and told Miss Evans exactly what had happened, though I knew that according to the letter of the law it would mean for Hugh the loss of the first three weeks of term. Miss Evans was much pleased with me for "owning up," and told me so; she was evidently very favourably disposed towards me, but gave me not the slightest hope of any relaxation of the rule. It was her duty to send for the school doctor and to consult him, and she did so. He came, heard the facts, and pronounced sentence—Hugh must remain at home for the first nineteen days of term. Miss Evans listened and expressed her sympathy; it was very hard, she said, on parents, but there was no help for it. Presently the doctor departed, and as soon as he was gone I rose to say good-bye. She shook me warmly by the hand, and, as she did so, said, "Well, then, that's settled; I shall hope to see

REMINISCENCES

Hugh here on Saturday next," naming a date only two or three days later than the beginning of term. I of course took the hint, said nothing about it, but thanked her and went home. Hugh returned on the Saturday, and "nobody seemed one penny the worse."

It was at the beginning of 1890, the year in which Hugh went to Eton, that we had the first great sorrow that came to us after our marriage, the first that made a real difference to our daily life. My mother-in-law, who had never had very good health, in 1884 began to be seriously ill, and after six years of more or less invalid life she died. My father-in-law followed her three years later. I had been on intimate terms with them both ever since I was a child, and after I became their son-in-law I was very much in their company and spent a considerable part of my time under their roof. The same reasons which prevent me from writing about my mother forbid me to say more about them than that it would have been impossible for me to be more fortunate than I was in acquiring them as relations. Their kindness to me and mine, from my earliest years onwards, was more than I could describe; and even now, after more than twenty years, I can safely say that not a day passes in which I do not think of them with gratitude and affection.

About the year 1882 I had been appointed by the Lord Chancellor (Lord Selborne) to be a Governor of Dulwich College. The work was interesting, but the Governing Body was in my opinion too large; and some of its members were persons who had no qualifications for duties of that

kind. If we had had a strong and efficient chairman, this would not so much have mattered; but such was not the case. The Rev. William Rogers, Rector of St. Botolph's, Bishopsgate, was a man of many friends, and a very pleasant and amusing companion; he had a very good head on his shoulders, had done excellent work elsewhere, and was considered to be an expert in educational matters; but as a chairman he did not shine. He not only did not keep order, but was himself a fertile cause of disorder. These things mitigated my regret at having to resign my Governorship, which I did about 1895, when, having been for six years a Governor of Rugby, I found that I had come to have more work of that kind than I could easily manage.

The Rugby Governorship came to me in 1889, and it was again a Lord Chancellor, this time Lord Halsbury, who nominated me. This was a very different affair: the Board was a small one (twelve members); the chairman was my old Head Master Dr. Temple, then Bishop of London, and soon to be Archbishop of Canterbury; and the Governors were all, or nearly all, thoroughly competent and well qualified for that kind of work. Several of them were old friends or acquaintances of my own—Lord Norton, my father's friend, who as Mr. Adderley had taken me to Rugby in 1862; his brother-in-law, Lord Leigh; the Dean of Westminster (G. G. Bradley); Lord Lingen; Mr. Goschen, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, himself a Rugbeian and elder brother of my old Rugby friend, already mentioned. The Archbishop was an excellent chairman, so far as was possible for a

REMINISCENCES

man who was otherwise thoroughly overworked; and I, as soon as I had settled down, set myself to give him all the help that I could, trying to relieve him of all such work as some one else could do for him, and to act as a sort of unrecognised secretary. He was not always very willing to be helped, but our personal relations were such that I knew pretty well how far I could go; and he was always most kind, and was sometimes perhaps ready to accept from an old pupil and friend little services which he might not have accepted from others. In this way we went on till 1902, by which time I had come to know more about the work of the Governing Body, and to be taking a more active part in it, than any other member, except of course the chairman. At the end of that year the Archbishop died, and at our next meeting we had to elect his successor. Lord Spencer, who was our deputy chairman, was proposed and unanimously chosen; but he at once declined, solely on the ground that he was already chairman of the Harrow Governing Body, and could not undertake Rugby as well. He then proposed my name; it was seconded by Lord Norton and I was unanimously elected.

I have given these details because the Rugby chairmanship, which I have held since January, 1903, has occupied an appreciable part of my time and thoughts. For a chairman who takes his duties seriously there is really a good deal to be done, and the questions to be dealt with are generally interesting and often important. I have been very fortunate in my colleagues, and I hope we may consider that we have deserved well of the school, of which at this moment half of us are old

LORD KILBRACKEN

members. We have for twenty years been trying to get the finances of the school gradually into a sound and satisfactory condition ; and in this undertaking, which when we began it was certainly much needed, I should venture to say we had succeeded, if it were not for the uncertainty caused by the present war in this as in all other financial affairs.

It was in 1882 that I ceased to have any official relations with Mr. Gladstone, but throughout the remaining sixteen years of his life, whether he was or was not in office, I saw him often and was in frequent communication with him. Usually he was at work upon some book or magazine article, about which he liked to talk to me, and sometimes even to write to me, though he was not by nature a letter-writer, and seldom wrote to anyone (except Mrs. Gladstone) without some definite object in view. Politics he hardly ever mentioned to me, but there were exceptions. One such occasion is specially distinct in my memory : it was, I think, my first meeting with him after he had finally left office in 1894. He then had cataract in both eyes, one eye was quite blind, and the other nearly so. He was staying at a house at Dollis Hill, to the north of London, lent to him by Lord Aberdeen ; and, being unable to read to himself or to write, he liked to have long visits in the afternoon from his friends ; so one day it was arranged that I should go down ; I arrived soon after luncheon, and was to stay till after dinner. Mr. Gladstone had somehow got it into his head that I had come at the cost of great inconvenience to myself : this was not the case, and I did my best to undeceive him, but he would not be convinced, and at intervals through-

REMINISCENCES

out the afternoon he embarrassed me by expressions of gratitude. We sat mostly in the garden; and there he, from his arm-chair, made for my benefit one of those impromptu speeches which I have already described: this was, I think, the longest, the most vigorous, and perhaps the best that I ever heard from him. The subject was the new scheme of death-duties, just introduced by Sir William Harcourt; a scheme which, so long as Mr. Gladstone remained at the head of the Cabinet, could never have been proposed, for he most strongly objected to high death-duties and to everything else which tended to discourage or penalize thrift, foresight, and accumulation. This measure he denounced with such strength, fire, and eloquence that, if his speech had been delivered in the House of Commons, instead of being addressed to an audience of one in the Dollis Hill garden, I verily believe it must have been fatal to Harcourt's proposals. Later in the day, when dinner came, we were a party of four; the only guest besides myself was a lady who was a water-drinker; so, I think, was Mrs. Gladstone; and Mr. Gladstone, though he generally drank wine, was just then, if I remember right, an abstainer under doctor's orders. I noticed soon after we sat down that he was peering about, with his one poor half-blind eye, for some object which he could not discover, and presently he turned rather angrily to the butler: "Where is the champagne? I told you to hand some champagne." The champagne was there all right, though he had failed to see it; and I was much touched, well knowing that the champagne was a recognition of the quite imaginary trouble and

LORD KILBRACKEN

inconvenience which he insisted on thinking I had incurred in order to visit him. He was, as is well known, a most generous man, but very careful about the details of his expenditure; and to anyone who was familiar with his habits this little incident will seem, I know, significant and characteristic.

Of my visits to Hawarden, which were pretty frequent—I have often wished in subsequent years that they had been more frequent—I have already spoken. Until his last illness began, in 1897, the change in him was wonderfully slight: our conversations seemed to be just what they had always been. There was some slight bodily failure, tree-cutting and all violent exercise had of course been abandoned, and towards the end drives were generally substituted for long walks: his deafness, though he always talked much of it and made the most of it, was really not serious. Perhaps the most noticeable change was the slight huskiness which affected his voice during the last few years; but there were moments when it seemed to disappear, and his utterance was, for a time, as clear and musical as ever. I remember one evening, certainly not more than two or three years before his death (he was eighty-eight when he died), coming down to dinner at Hawarden, and hearing him, as he sat alone in the room where we were to assemble, singing a mysterious chant which he used to raise whenever he himself came down punctually and found that all the other members of his family party were late. It so happened that I had never heard it before, and I stopped on the staircase to listen. His singing voice was by nature a remark-

REMINISCENCES

ably good one, and on this occasion, though not loud, it seemed to fill the house; one could hardly believe that it really proceeded from a man of his age. A year or so before his last illness he had a slight accident, which wounded the skin of one of his arms. I arrived at Hawarden a few days afterwards, when his doctor, who had just visited him, had been amazed at the rapidity of the healing. Mrs. Gladstone, very triumphant, told him that he must show me his arm, and insisted on my going into his study, "The Temple of Peace" as it was called, to look at the scar. I went in alone, Mrs. Gladstone remaining in the drawing-room. Mr. Gladstone bared his arm for my inspection, and I paid him my compliment, which he received with a smile and a joke. Then, becoming suddenly very grave, he said, "You know, this is to me a serious and rather alarming thing." I said nothing, but I suppose I looked puzzled. "I mean," he went on, "this excessive vitality and power of resistance. At my age, one may have to pay for it." Often did I think of these words during the ten tedious months of suffering which preceded his death, when he was slowly succumbing to an illness which might have ended a less vigorous and obstinate life in half the time.

During one of my visits in the course of these last years, Mr. Gladstone told me the story of his adventure with a cow, which had happened a few days before; and, although the incident did not come under my own observation, I shall write down the account that he gave me of it. The newspapers got hold of it in a more or less inaccurate form, and there was a good deal of laughter about

it at the time, naturally enough, though it might well have been a serious affair. He was walking alone, he said, through a wood in Hawarden Park, when he met this animal, standing in the path and barring his passage. It had escaped from a neighbouring farm, and was known to be a very dangerous beast, but of this, of course, he was not aware. He walked straight up to it and threatened it with a light stick which he was carrying, upon which it immediately charged him and knocked him down flat on his back. It then did its best, again and again, to gore him as he lay; but luckily found it impossible to get its head so low as to bring the points of its horns to bear; and he, showing great presence of mind, did not attempt to rise, but managed after a time to wriggle gradually off the path and into the fern beside it. Then, having got near to a big tree, he suddenly stood up and took cover behind it. The animal looked at him for a minute or two and then walked away. Mr. Gladstone thereupon completed his walk and got home for tea, but never mentioned his adventure—so his family told me—until they were at dinner that evening. It was altogether a rather marvellous performance for a man of about eighty-five, and as such I think it worth recording.

In the summer of 1897 I paid the last visit that I was destined to pay to Hawarden before his final illness, and in some respects it was the most memorable of all. It was at the time of the Queen's second Jubilee; the Public Offices were closed, and with the help of a Sunday I managed to get a holiday of five or six days. The whole of the Hawarden party, except Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone

REMINISCENCES

and Miss Helen Gladstone, had gone up to town to see the show, which I on the other hand was most anxious to avoid; and no manner of life and no company could at that moment have been to me more sympathetic and congenial than what I found at Hawarden. The time that I spent there was delightful; the weather was splendid throughout, and there was an indescribable atmosphere of peace and calm, which seemed to be increased by our knowledge of the bustle and turmoil in London and elsewhere. I had never known Mr. Gladstone—then in his eighty-eighth year—in greater force, nor had I during any previous visit had so much of his company and conversation; he talked as much as ever, and seemed especially inclined to pour forth reminiscences of his early days, many of which were new to me. I came back to London, thinking that there was no reason why he should not go on with little change for another five years; and yet, within a month, I believe, of my departure the first signs of his fatal illness had begun to show themselves.

My next visit was in May, 1898, when I was summoned to Hawarden from London to see him for the last time, a few days before his death. He was then in a perfectly peaceful state, apparently suffering no pain, sitting up in a large arm-chair, and talking to me almost as he might have talked before his illness; asking me about my various belongings, and especially about Hugh at Oxford. I was in his room for perhaps rather more than five minutes, and my impression of him is one which it is altogether pleasant to recall: the great stillness, the bright sunshine pouring in at the open window,

LORD KILBRACKEN

the feeling that the worst was over and that rest was at hand. He died on Ascension Day, May 19th, and in the evening I went to church and heard quite unexpectedly, in the lesson for the day, the repeated question: "Knowest thou that the Lord will take away thy Master from thy head to-day?" and the answer, "Yea, I know it." A week later I was one of the small group of ex-Private Secretaries and intimate friends who, immediately after the members of his family, followed his coffin to the grave in Westminster Abbey.

CHAPTER VIII

THE account which I have given of my relations with Mr. Gladstone has carried me down to the year 1898; I now go back to 1890 in order to mention the death of my uncle Denis Godley, which took place in that year. He had some years previously resigned the Secretaryship of the Irish Land Commission, of which he might be said to have been the "Managing Director" ever since its creation in 1871. He then took a house at Ascot, where I used often to visit him; and he and his wife, so well known to two generations as "Aunt Kate," continued to play an important part in my existence, as they had done ever since I was a child. My uncle was certainly one of the cleverest and most amusing and agreeable men that I have known: his influence on me, when I was young, was considerable, nor did it altogether cease in later years. His wife, who had become a Roman Catholic, lived the life of a saint—a very charming, sympathetic, humorous, and capable saint; for which form of existence Ascot, with its important religious establishments, monastery, nunnery, and church, offered every facility. She survived him by nearly twenty years, and died at a great age on the 9th of December, 1909, retaining to the last her really extraordinary power of interesting, attracting, and making a speedy conquest of anyone, old

LORD KILBRACKEN

or young, of either sex, who had so much as a quarter of an hour's conversation with her, while never for a moment departing from her usual quiet, reserved, and unemotional manner. During the whole time of her widowhood she inhabited a little cottage in the grounds of the nunnery at South Ascot, living a most retired life, with a small staff of servants who were invariably, like herself, Irish Roman Catholics, and it was impossible to visit her without hearing sayings and anecdotes which carried one straight into the atmosphere of Somerville and Ross's Irish stories. In spite of her secluded life, she had many devoted friends: her funeral was attended—or so it seemed—by half the population of Ascot; and it was a significant incident that the young priest who preached her funeral sermon, although he had only known her for the last eighteen months of her life, when she was very old, blind, and infirm, broke down in the middle of his discourse and fairly wept in the pulpit. For her great kindness and affection during nearly fifty years of intimacy, and for her sympathy and help at a time when they were to me invaluable, I owe her a debt that I can never forget.

In 1895 my eldest daughter married, and in 1904 my youngest daughter followed her sister's example: we then sold our house in Ennismore Gardens, which had now become much too large for our needs or wishes, and took a smaller but very convenient and comfortable one in Sloane Gardens. We now kept our headquarters at Minley for a much larger part of the year than before, and I lived there as much as was compatible with the full performance of my duties at the India Office, never

REMINISCENCES

sleeping in town if I could possibly avoid it. Visiting in country houses I had almost entirely given up since 1895, but I still used to spend four or five consecutive weeks, in August or September, staying with near relations or intimate friends, including always a few days with Robert Tillard at his rectory of Tittleshall, in Norfolk. The country round his home was, in a quiet way, very attractive, and the neighbourhood was full of most interesting churches, which he and I used to visit together; for he shared to the full my passion for church-hunting. My long series of visits to him, which began in 1870 when he was a curate at Meole Brace, near Shrewsbury, ended only with his death in 1915. I cannot say how much I enjoyed them, or how much I shall miss them henceforward.

It seems remarkable, and yet it admits of a very easy explanation, that the years between 1896 and 1905 inclusive, years in which I lived a very unsocial life and saw very few new faces, should have been marked for me by the formation of four or five friendships which have been among the greatest and most enduring pleasures and interests of my later life. More than this I will not say; if the friends to whom I refer should ever read these pages, they will have no difficulty in identifying themselves; and they know well, without any words of mine, how much I owe them, and how great and lasting is my gratitude.

Long before Mr. Gladstone's death in 1898 it had been suggested to me by various persons that I should be his biographer, but I never thought seriously about it until, after his death, the question of the Life began to be generally discussed. The

choice lay with his three surviving sons, who were his executors. Several friends of mine, among them James Bryce, spoke to me about it, and expressed a hope that I should undertake the task, and one day Rosebery, having asked me to come and see him, talked to me at some length in the same sense. He was, I think, really anxious that I should undertake it, but what was evident was that he was still more anxious that John Morley should not undertake it; the thought of his doing so, Rosebery said, "gives me a cold shiver." This was a strong expression, but it was not unintelligible; anyone who knew the two men well was aware that between them there was in essentials a great gulf fixed, and that they never had been, and never could be, really intimate. My reply to him was to the effect that, putting aside for a moment the question of personal unfitness, I did not think that so great a work ought to be entrusted to a man of no literary experience. Possibly I might be able to do it successfully; on the other hand, I might not, and it was almost certain that if I attempted it I should be a very long time about it, which would not suit the Gladstone family at all. As for the India Office, I assumed, and he, I think, admitted, that if I undertook the work I must resign. I then said that I felt myself very much bound to the India Office; that I had been appointed to it when I was comparatively young and ignorant, but had now learned the work and felt that I was of some use; the time, therefore, had come for me to repay my debt to the State. Of the various motives which might be supposed to tell in favour of accepting the offer if it should be made, one and one only

REMINISCENCES

appealed to me personally, namely, the wish that the work should be as well done as possible. But I was by no means disposed to think that I was the person who could do it best: on the contrary, I believed that I should be of most use as a helper, and in this capacity I was prepared to give any amount of time and trouble, without looking for any thanks or honourable mention.

These were the reasons that I gave. There were others that I did not give; and about them I will only say that they would, I know, have entirely commended themselves to Mr. Gladstone himself, if I had been able to put the case before him.

I think that I produced some effect on Rosebery's mind. But our conversation was premature, inasmuch as I had at that time heard nothing from the Gladstones on the subject. A few days later, however, Herbert Gladstone came to see me at the India Office and sounded me, without making a definite offer. I answered him as I had answered Rosebery. He then asked my opinion about two or three possible biographers, including John Morley, and departed. A fortnight or three weeks later I received a letter from Eddie Hamilton, who was an intimate friend of the Gladstones and of mine, asking me on their behalf for a final yes or no; and in case I should refuse—which of course they expected—again discussing other possible names. I replied in the same sense as before, and there the matter ended so far as I was concerned.

I do not know why the Gladstones got Hamilton to write to me instead of writing themselves. At the time, I thought that they were perhaps unwilling to commit themselves on paper; but from

LORD KILBRACKEN

what they afterwards said to me I know that they meant to make me a "firm offer," and considered that they had done so.

About three weeks later I heard that John Morley was likely to have the offer, and when I went to Hawarden on Oct. 1st I learned that it was settled.

In the following February, 1899, I met John Morley at the Athenæum; he took me aside and spoke to me about the Biography, asking me to give him my help. This of course I was on every ground more than ready to do, and I said so. And I hope I may consider that I was as good as my word; I placed myself entirely at his disposal, and during the five years (more or less) which he spent upon the work I was at times in very constant communication with him: on the other hand, there were long intervals, one of them of more than three years and a half, during which I did not hear a word from him on the subject. Altogether he submitted to me the proofs of, I think, about half the book; I received from him over thirty letters (I have preserved twenty-two of them), and I suppose wrote to him about the same number; and I have a vivid recollection of dining with him on one occasion and having a talk *tête-à-tête* which lasted till long past midnight. I must also record the fact that in the course of our correspondence he used very strong expressions as to the value of my observations, criticisms, and suggestions, and as to his own gratitude: but I do this solely in order to make it clear that, to the best of my ability, I kept my promise; and I need hardly add that, if he had wished to make more use of me than he

REMINISCENCES

actually did, I should have been entirely at his service.

In order to dispose of this subject, I will mention here that in 1906, and again in 1910 after my retirement from the public service, I was asked by Henry and Herbert Gladstone to undertake a supplementary Life of Mr. Gladstone, which should be devoted mainly to a description of the man himself, his character, manners and customs, apart from his career as a statesman. This in 1906 I could not have undertaken, for the reasons which influenced me in 1898. Some of these ceased to exist when I had left the India Office, but others remained; I did not see my way to dealing successfully with the subject as matters then stood, nor did I think that there was, in the circumstances, any opening for a work of that kind. I therefore declined, and I observe that so far (1916) no one else has attempted the task.

During the two years by which Mrs. Gladstone survived her husband I paid her two or three visits at Hawarden. She was a pathetic figure, but still dignified, interesting, and interested as ever, although, as the result of her great age and the shock which she had suffered, her memory was more or less affected and her mind less clear than it had been. These symptoms were perceptible when she was in company, and when I was sent out for a *tête-à-tête* drive with her they continued as before, until it occurred to me to ask her some question about her early life, before she was married. At once she became perfectly lucid and coherent; her memory seemed to revive, and with very slight and occasional encouragement from me she poured

LORD KILBRACKEN

forth her recollections of those early days; days about which I had previously heard little or nothing. During the rest of that drive, and during a good part of those that followed I found that she was able to talk on, in her own picturesque and amusing way, so long as we kept to these and similar topics; and I am sure she enjoyed it, as I did. I believe that her last days, though full of sorrow, were peaceful and not unhappy; and she had not long to wait. In 1900 I saw her laid by the side of her husband in Westminster Abbey.

In 1907 my mother died at the age of eighty-five. Her illness was very short, and free from suffering. I have written very little about her, but I have written enough to show how large a part she played in my life; much larger, by reason of my father's early death and her long life, than that which mothers commonly play in the lives of their sons. She had a large number of devoted friends; she did much good to many persons in many ways; and she might have done even more, if it had not been for an excessive but most genuine humility and distrust of her own powers, which no doubt sometimes prevented her from making adequate use of her gifts and opportunities. But she had one great opportunity which she used to the full; and as to this I shall quote the words written in 1863 by James Edward Fitzgerald, afterwards Prime Minister of New Zealand, who was one of the early settlers in the Province of Canterbury, and became an intimate friend of my father and mother during the time that they spent in that country. At the end of a short memoir of my father, prefixed to a collection of his speeches and letters, he writes:

REMINISCENCES

“A notice of Mr. Godley’s Colonial career would be very incomplete if it were to omit all mention of one who took no small share in his labours. Mrs. Godley’s residence in the colony was not necessarily an agreeable one. It was not an enviable position for a lady who had lived among the luxuries that accompany wealth, and the gentle courtesies that surround high birth, to submit to the discomforts and inconveniences inseparable from the foundation of a new settlement. It has been our misfortune to hear many ladies in this country [New Zealand], even those who left straitened circumstances and precarious prospects at home for rough plenty and the promise of wealth there, grumble in no measured terms at the indignities to which they conceived themselves to be subjected—‘So different from what we have been accustomed to.’ Those who knew Mrs. Godley, not only casually, and as it were under the disguise of company manners, but in the most retired relations of home, never heard her utter a complaint or pretend to despise the tasks in which she had to engage, or the people with whom she had to associate. The humblest of those who were brought into contact with her—

—found

Instead of scornful pity, or pure scorn,
Such fine reserve and noble reticence,
Manners so kind, yet stately, such a grace
Of tenderest courtesy.

She, like her husband who is gone, could understand how the little offices of daily life became sanctified and ennobled by the name of duty. She, too, believed in the nobility of work, and what her

hand found to do she did it with her might. She left us the example, how it is possible, in the midst of harassing cares and unwonted discomfort, to be gentle and serene and cheerful and uniformly courteous to all; and how little it needs of worldly wealth to create the purest type of an English home on the shores of a scarcely inhabited island. Ought we thus to speak of one whose eyes these pages may one day chance to meet? Or may not a separation which is probably for eternity plead forgiveness for the intrusion? Had he lived it might have been otherwise: for he ever looked forward to visiting at some future time the scene of his labours, in the company of some of those who so nobly sustained him in his work. But from us now she, too, stands separated by a gulf scarcely less wide and deep than that which he has crossed for ever."

The subject of this passage was one that required delicate handling; perhaps I may be prejudiced, but it seems to me that it could hardly have been better done, and its literary merit is such that I could not refuse myself the pleasure of quoting it in full.

A few days after my mother's death my Aunt Frances Wynne, who was considerably younger, followed her. To my sisters and myself no other death in that generation could have made so great a difference; we had all been on the most affectionate and intimate terms with her from childhood. She was remarkably clever, with an extraordinary gift for doing things, and doing them well; as an amateur artist she was quite in the first class, though she was too modest ever to attempt anything on a large scale. This excessive humility and

REMINISCENCES

diffidence, which was common to various members of her family, reached its climax in her; she steadily hid all her lights under bushels, and only a select few of her relations and friends knew what she really was.

If my mother had lived a few months longer she would have seen me attain the age of sixty, at which I had previously made up my mind to retire from the public service. But when the time came I hesitated, and finally postponed my disappearance for another two years, when I should have completed my twenty-sixth year at the India Office. I had already held the post of Under-Secretary of State considerably longer than anyone else in that or any other office, and, if I had chosen to stay till I reached the age fixed for compulsory retirement, I should have all but completed twenty-nine years in that one post. But my health at that time was not very good; I did not expect a long life, and, like my great Master, I was determined to have, if possible, a few years of peace and leisure before my final disappearance. Even as it was, I established a record which is not likely soon to be beaten, for the tendency seems now to be against the appointment of young men to important offices. I happened one day, when I had been at the India Office for many years, to sit at dinner next to Mr. Choate, the United States Ambassador. He questioned me at some length about my position, duties, and responsibilities, and finally asked me at what age I had been appointed. I replied, "At thirty-five." He was astonished; so much so that he was, I could plainly see, inclined to be incredulous; he cross-examined me a little about my age, and I

hope, but am not quite sure, that I convinced him that I was speaking the truth.

I parted from my colleagues, though not from my duties, with sincere regret, which I hope I may confidently say was mutual. Lord Morley, who was Secretary of State at the time, offered me a membership of the Council of India, but I declined it; if I had been willing to remain in official fetters, I should have preferred to wear those to which I was accustomed. Mr. Gladstone himself can hardly have been more anxious than I was to have a time of freedom and leisure before going hence and being no more seen, and I had not, like him, to pay the penalty of greatness by remaining chained to the oar till well past eighty. For my first twelve or thirteen years at the India Office my work was to me thoroughly interesting, though never absorbing: for the next two or three years it was an invaluable distraction, occupying my mind and thoughts with external affairs, at a time when it was all-important to me that they should be so occupied, during a large part of the day; for the remainder of my time, about eleven years, it was, though not irksome or disagreeable, pure task-work. And yet I can say with confidence that, whatever my efficiency may previously have been, it was not diminished but increased during this last period. Nevertheless, my daily official round was never part of my real life; and no sooner had I walked out, one Saturday afternoon in October, 1909 (it was the 9th, St. Denis' Day), through that familiar doorway and taken the train to Minley, than I ceased, once for all, to think about the innumerable official matters which for twenty-six

REMINISCENCES

years had constantly occupied my mind, and, except when I served for a few months in 1913 on a Royal Commission on Indian currency, I might say with very slight exaggeration that I have never thought of them since.

A few days after my retirement I received a letter from the Prime Minister, informing me that the King, Edward VII, on hearing of my retirement had expressed a wish that some special honour should be conferred upon me. (As it happened, I had already heard privately from another source about the King's wish.) Accordingly, Asquith now offered me a Peerage, which I accepted, as those whom I was able to consult, and whom I most wished to please by my choice, were almost, if not quite, unanimous in favour of it; and I was furthermore influenced by my belief that this form of recognition would give more pleasure than any other to my colleagues at the India Office, who would regard it, quite rightly, as a compliment to themselves as well as to me. As for a title, I might have been inclined, for sentimental reasons, to take one from some place connected with my mother's family; and, if the Welsh names of places had not been for the most part unpronounceable, I should probably have done so, with the consent and approval of my cousin, John Wynne Finch, which, as I ascertained, would have been forthcoming. As it was, I had finally to fall back upon a name which had been suggested to me in a rather curious way. Many years before, when I was little more than a boy, I was out shooting at Killegar with three of my uncles, my father's brothers; and at luncheon the conversation turned upon the local

LORD KILBRACKEN

names of places. It was remarked how few of them were at all pleasant to the ear, but two or three exceptions were mentioned, and one of my uncles ended the conversation by saying, "Well, whenever Arthur is made a peer, I think he will have to take the title of Kilbracken," to which the others, amid laughter, assented. Needless to say that this way of putting it was merely a mild form of chaff, and that no one present thought that I had any more chance of becoming a peer than I had of becoming Archbishop of Canterbury. But the sentence stuck in my memory, and came in useful forty years later.

CHAPTER IX

It seems hardly worth while to write anything about the seven years ¹ that have passed since I left the India Office; but perhaps I may as well add a few pages in order to complete my task; and I shall begin by inserting copies of two letters which I wrote in the year 1911. The first describes the ceremony of my introduction into the House of Lords; it is, of course, an everyday affair, but I do not happen to know any detailed description of it in print.

‘29, Sloane Gardens, S.W.

‘16th February, 1911.

‘. . . I must tell you about my taking my seat, while it is fresh in my mind; you will like to have an “inside view” of the ceremony, “like Jonah’s view of the whale.”

‘No arrangements exist for instructing a new peer and helping him to do what is needful for taking his seat. I had a friend at Court, in the shape of Adolphus Liddell, the Lord Chancellor’s Secretary, and he—though it was not his business—was kind enough to make enquiries and find out what I had to do. Even he had some difficulty in ascertaining the details of the process. If any resolutions are proposed for the reform of the House of Lords, I

¹ Written in 1916.

LORD KILBRACKEN

hope that some amendment of this state of things may be included.

‘After hearing from Liddell, my first step was to write to my two supporters, and ascertain that they would be present on a certain day. Having heard from them, I then wrote to Garter King at Arms and to the Lord Chancellor, expressing a hope that the day (yesterday, 15th) would suit them; they replied in the affirmative. My two supporters, who must be Barons like myself, were Middleton and Welby; the former is a Viscount (Irish) but sits as Baron Brodrick. I chose the former because he was one of my *ci-devant* chiefs at the India Office; Welby I chose as an old friend, and a sort of “doyen” of the species of peer to which I myself belong. My next act was to go to Nathan’s, the costumier’s, and hire a robe for the occasion; it is, as you know, a very big affair, reaching almost to the ground, and completely hiding the morning dress over which it is worn, save only the shirt-collar and the shoes; it is red, with patches of white and of gold lace, and has one or two black bows on it; on each side there is a slit, through which one can protrude an arm. The robe arrived on Monday evening at this house, and then all was ready.

‘I must here interrupt my story to say that I went to Nathan’s with Hugh, who wanted a costume for a fancy ball on the 22nd. He got one, much handsomer than mine, and consisting of a greater number of pieces, and to be used for several hours, whereas mine would be in use only for a few minutes. Yet he had to pay only 30s. and I £2 2s. This is of a piece with the fact that a cup of tea in

REMINISCENCES

the House of Lords costs a shilling: at the Athenæum, 5*d.*; and in the House of Commons, 4*d.*

‘To resume. The great day arrived, and was brilliantly fine: soon after three I went off alone in the car, with my robes in a suit-case, and, on interrogating the policemen and messengers at the door of the House of Lords, as instructed, was told that I must go to the “Moses” room—so called because of a large fresco which it contains. I had come very early, so as to send back the motor for my woman-kind; “Moses” was empty, but five or six cocked hats, of peculiar shape, arranged in a row on a table, showed that I was expected. I deposited my suit-case, and went out for a walk in the sunshine, watched some Westminster boys playing football in a sea of black mud in Dean’s Yard, and then returned. By this time, 3.45, “Moses” was well filled. Both my supporters were present, and were in the act of robing: also (not Garter, who is unwell, but) Garter’s Deputy, viz. Somerset Herald: he was in a costume which, for gorgeousness, it would be hard to beat—perfectly resplendent with gold, and bright colours, and heraldic devices. The Deputy Black Rod (Captain Butler) was also present in his Court suit, and we were soon joined by the Lord Great Chamberlain, Lord Carrington, with his wand of office, in robes. We then, the party being complete, chose each a hat from the row above-mentioned; they are (as I said) cocked hats, made rather stiff, but roomy, so as to be well fitted for easy removal and replacement; and then all was ready. By this time it was four o’clock, and we waited till prayers should be over, when the Lord Chancellor would summon us. In a few minutes

the doors were thrown open, and we were called in. I should have mentioned that, while we waited, Black Rod and Somerset Herald gave me some instruction as to the proceedings, and the Reading Clerk (Alderson), who was there in a Court suit, and had been studying the words of my Patent, asked me how he should pronounce the name "Killegar." Well, being summoned, we formed our procession; first Black Rod, then the Great Chamberlain, then Somerset Herald, then Welby (being the junior of my two supporters; junior goes first), then I, then Middleton; the Reading Clerk was already in the House. We entered at a slow pace; the House was, of course, sitting, the Lord Chancellor on the Woolsack, just below the steps of the Throne, and perhaps twenty or twenty-five peers scattered about the seats; there were a good many spectators in the various little boxes on the ground floor, and at the Bar of the House, and a few (Walter, my nephew, among them) on the steps of the Throne. Lady Kilbracken and E. were in the Peeresses' gallery, very conspicuous: H. and K. in the box where the married daughters of peers are located; Hugh was standing close to them. We entered, "with a dignified absence of speed," by what in a Cathedral would be the West Door. At once we were the cynosure of all eyes, and the Lord Chancellor's face (he is an old Oxford friend) extended itself into a broad smile. We all bowed as we entered, bare-headed, and kept on bowing as we advanced. When we got to the Woolsack, I knelt on one knee before the Lord Chancellor, the others standing round me, and gave him my Patent—a large roll of parchment which was handed to

REMINISCENCES

me by Somerset Herald—and my writ of summons to Parliament, which was like a small flat package attached to a luggage label. He immediately gave them back to me, and the whole party of us then moved to the Table, which stands in the middle of the House, not far from the Woolsack. By this we stood in a row, while the Reading Clerk, taking my Patent, proceeded to read it from beginning to end in a loud, clear voice. This took four or five minutes: it set forth that Edward the Seventh, for good and sufficient reasons, had thought fit, etc. etc., to confer, etc. etc., the dignity etc. etc. of a Baron of the United Kingdom upon his trusty and well-beloved, etc. etc.; my old name and my new name recurring at short intervals with a sort of numbing effect. Having finished this, he then took from me and read my writ of summons, which commanded me, under pain of George V's most serious displeasure, to be present at his Palace of Westminster on Jan. 31 (this was on Feb. 15) for the transaction of business of the highest importance; of which I was to fail at my peril. Then he stopped, and handed me a large card, on which was printed, in enormous type, the words of the oath, with a blank for my name. I was so confused by the perpetual repetition of the words "Kilbracken of Killegar" in the Patent and Writ, that, if he had not prompted me, I should have begun "I, Killegar"; but this I just avoided, and proceeded to read out the oath, which is quite short, without feeling any alarm at the sound of my own voice, and ended with the emphatic peroration, "So help me God." The clerk then handed me a very nice little old New Testament, in a pretty binding, whispering, "You

needn't kiss it unless you like." But I chose to kiss it, hoping that the germs, if any, would be of an ennobling and aristocratic kind; and I then signed the roll, which lay before me on the table. The procession, now reduced to Somerset Herald, Welby, self and Midleton, then re-formed, and marched down the House nearly to what we may call the west end; then we three, Shadrach, Meshech, and Abednego, "the same three noblemen," turning to the left, took our seats on the back bench, called "The Barons' Bench," which is also the highest; while Somerset stood, blazing like the sun, in front of us, and gave *sotto voce* the word of command:—"Sit down—put on your hats—stand up—take off your hats—bow to the Chancellor—put on your hats—sit down—stand up—take off your hats——" and so on *da capo*.

'All this we punctually performed, like automata, or as if worked by wires, quite simultaneously: we ought to have made *three* bows, but Somerset, in the excitement of the moment, lost count, and made us bow *four* times. Nobody, however, seemed to object: and when we had made our fourth bow, and had sat down for the fifth time, we were free to depart, which we did, bareheaded, and with more bowing, by a door at the east end (so to speak) of the House, thus passing the Woolsack, and I, as I passed, shaking hands with the Chancellor. This is the end of the ritual: as he shook hands, he said some kindly words about our old friendship at Balliol.

'After this, we had nothing to do but to return to "Moses" and disrobe: I thanked my two kind introducers, and from the force of newly-acquired

REMINISCENCES

habit had some difficulty in restraining myself from kneeling before them and making three bows. Welby and I then adjourned to the tea-room, where I found my womankind, to the number of four, already assembled with Adolphus Liddell, who had invited us all to tea. The spectators all expressed themselves as much pleased with the way in which the ceremony had gone off, and had found the ludicrous side of it less apparent than they expected. Altogether, from the moment when we left "Moses" to the moment when we returned to him, it had taken about a quarter of an hour—perhaps a little less.

'Since writing what stands above, I happened to meet Lord Lansdowne (who was present on the occasion) in the street. He told me that Lady Somebody, a friend of his (I forget her name), had come to the House under the mistaken impression that it was the day of a big debate; but she assured him she was amply repaid by the ceremony which she had witnessed.'

Having thus taken my seat, I was qualified to take part in the important division on the Parliament Bill in the summer of the same year, and by way of record will insert another letter in which I described my experiences.

'12th Aug. 1911.

'On Tuesday, Aug. 8th, I went to London partly on my own affairs, but mainly in order to vote, if required, against insisting on the Lords' amendments to the Parliament Bill. I had been can-

vassed, of course, by the "Forwards"—the party of Lord Halsbury and Lord Willoughby de Broke—and had also had letters from Lord Cromer, who made himself the mouthpiece of those Unionist Peers who were prepared, if necessary, to vote against insistence, and not merely to abstain. But my mind, without that, was quite made up.

'It was the day of the Vote of Censure, and I had some thoughts of going as a listener (not a voter) to the House of Lords, but did not; the heat was intense, and the next day, Wednesday, was, I believe, the hottest ever known in London since regular records have been kept.

'I had been told—we had all been told—that the division about insisting on the Lords' amendments would take place on the Wednesday, and I went to the House about five; I soon found, by conversation with others, that there was little chance of a division before Thursday: and this was finally confirmed when I came back after going home to dine. On both occasions, however, I sat for some time in a baddish atmosphere, to see the spectacle and to hear the speeches. It was an impressive sight: the House was absolutely full during a great part of the time, and all the places to which strangers are admitted were packed as full as they could hold: the Peeresses' gallery, too, was a sight to see. The speaking I thought quite moderate, most of it indifferent. The best performance by far that I heard—I am now thinking of *both* nights—was that of the Archbishop of York, in whose favour I am perhaps prejudiced inasmuch as he exactly expressed my views. Next to him came Lord Newton, but in a very different style: the Archbishop spoke like a

REMINISCENCES

finished artist, never pausing for a word, rounding off all his sentences and his paragraphs with a skill worthy of Mr. Gladstone, and rising at the end into real eloquence, with a very effective text of Scripture as his last word. Lord Newton gave one rather the impression of a country gentleman addressing a local meeting; there was nothing about his opening to raise one's expectations: he hesitated between his sentences, and delivered them with a grave and impassive countenance. But before he had spoken for two minutes, it was evident that he was talking remarkably good common sense, and then there came a humorous and unexpected phrase—the House laughed; very soon another, and another; at each the laughter was louder and longer, and at last the merriment was so long and loud that he had to stand silent for a considerable time; and then, and not till then, he suddenly smiled as he looked round the House; then the noise subsided, and he went on, as grave as before. It was a very effective performance, and seemed to suit his audience exactly.

‘Rosebery spoke well, of course, but to my mind rather overdid the dramatic business; inflections of the voice, and something of the style of a mid-Victorian tragic actor. Milner was poor and ineffective: he spoke slowly, and paused a long time between his sentences: Rosebery, who was sitting just in front of me, turned round and said to me in a whisper, “These are very slow lobs.” A minute or two afterwards he said, “Are you going to vote against insisting?” “Yes, I think so: are you?” “Well—yes—if I can bring myself to do it, I will. But, you see” (and he looked very grave and

melancholy), "I influence no one—I bring no one with me." "Yes, you do; you bring *me*." At this he laughed, and I could see that, although he spoke doubtfully, he had really quite made up his mind to vote, and not merely to abstain. On the second evening, a few more or less distinguished people—among them Lord Camperdown, who spoke sense, but spoke it very badly, the papers in his hand shaking all the time like leaves in a high wind, so great was his nervousness—carried on the debate till ten o'clock; then arose cries of "Divide, divide," and the Lord Chancellor stood up and read out the question for decision. A noble lord, who was sitting next to me, was going to catch a train to Northumberland, and was among those who shouted "Divide" most eagerly. But then suddenly was seen at the table an imposing figure, in evening dress, with an enormous white tie and a commanding air—Lord Curzon! who had evidently made up his mind to have the last word on this historic occasion. My neighbour groaned and sank back in his seat. Curzon spoke for twenty minutes—quite well, fluently, and not ineffectively, but all perfectly commonplace. At last he sat down; there was a gleam in the eye of the noble lord near me, but only for an instant: the strange little form of Lord Halsbury was standing already where Curzon had been, and was uttering something rather inaudible, with an angry frown. This went on for five minutes: again our hopes rose: but this time it was Rosebery who darted forward with lightning speed from the cross-benches, and in his melodramatic fashion announced his intention of voting with the Government. And then—would

REMINISCENCES

the line stretch out till the crack of doom?—up jumped Lord Selborne, who, with every appearance of anger, and by way of crushing Rosebery, read out a long extract from a speech which Rosebery had made last year, following it up with a rather violent oration of some four or five minutes. When he sat down, it was obvious that the patience of the House was exhausted; the Lord Chancellor again put the question—"That this House do not insist upon its amendments." There was a roar of "Content," then a much louder roar of "Not Content." I may say here that throughout the proceedings nearly all the noise and impetus seemed to be on the side of the Halsbury party—the "no surrender" men; and any stranger would have supposed, from the tone and temper of the House, that they were going to win easily. "I think the Contents have it," said the Chancellor; this, of course, was followed by another roar of "Not Content"; and then everyone stood up, and the peers who were not going to vote began to straggle out of the House. Two minutes later by the sand-glass the question was, according to rule, put again, with more shouting of "Content" and "Not Content"; then the doors were locked, and everyone who then remained in the House had to vote whether he liked it or not. We, the Contents, streamed out of the House by the side of the Throne, turned to the left, passed through the lobby, and so back into the House again; but, as one enters, one has to run the gauntlet of two noble lords, tellers, who call out a number as one passes them. In the meantime the Not-contents, having left the House by its other end, were streaming in again after performing on

LORD KILBRACKEN

their side a similar series of evolutions. I went through the lobby with the Bishop of Winchester (Edward Talbot) and with my brother-in-law, Walter Northbourne: conversation was going on all round us, and the impression seemed to be universal that we were in a minority. When I got back into the House, Burghclere, who was already there, made signs to me to sit by him: he had been watching the symptoms carefully, and said, "We're beaten—I'm nearly sure we're beaten." Certainly I thought so too. But presently it was evident that the other stream was drying up, while Burghclere and I, looking at the passage which led from our lobby into the House, could see an uninterrupted flow of men in evening dress, men in morning dress, and bishops in their robes, coming steadily along. Burghclere began to say, "I believe we've won, after all." Then someone came from the other side of the House and said, "I hear they're 114." Thereupon someone on our side, who had just passed the tellers, said, "My number was 116." That made us safe, provided that it was true that the other side had only 114, of which we could not be sure; but a little *sotto voce* cheering began to break out on our side, and went on for a minute or more whilst our last men came slowly in—among them the almost blind Lord Courtney, led by Lord Rendel. Then all were in, and the tellers walked quickly to the Woolsack, and it was observed that Lord Herschell, the Government teller, gave the paper to the Chancellor. This was a sign that our side had won, and there was a loud cheer, followed by a sudden silence, and the Chancellor read the figures—131 to 114. Then, of

REMINISCENCES

course, there was loud cheering which lasted for some time, and in a moment the whole assembly began to dissolve; while more loud cheering was heard in the corridors and lobbies outside. I ran against Margot and Violet Asquith, who of course were all smiles, but I had no talk with them: also against Mrs. Davidson, to whom I paid my compliment, well deserved, upon the Archbishop of Canterbury's little utterance; it was not a speech, but it was a very effective statement of his intention to vote and of his reasons for voting. As I emerged into the street, with a good many others, I passed between two lines of excited spectators, who were some of them cheering, some booing, and some singing "God save the King." And then—in an instant all was changed; it was comparatively cool; a soft breeze was blowing: and just at that moment Big Ben began to strike eleven. I speedily forgot the strife of parties, and the "odious business," as Lord Crewe truly called it, in which I had been taking part, and in the comparatively calm and uncontentious atmosphere of the Inner Circle train made my way home.'

In the year 1911 I was nominated by Asquith to a Trusteeship of the British Museum. The duties of a Trustee, not being one of the three so-called "Principal Trustees," are hardly more than nominal; but interesting subjects are often discussed at the meetings, and it is a pleasure and an honour to have a share, however small, in the management of such a great and famous concern.

In 1909 the Principal and Fellows of Hertford College, Oxford, of which I had myself been a

LORD KILBRACKEN

Fellow for seven years (1874-1881), were good enough to elect me to an Honorary Fellowship; and in 1912 the Master and Fellows of Balliol paid me the same compliment. Considering the large number of Balliol men who might reasonably be thought worthy of being thus glorified by the College, and the quality of the small and select band who at that time were already Honorary Fellows, I regard this as one of the highest honours that I have ever received. But this opinion does not seem to be generally held, if I am to judge by the fact that when I was made a Peer I received nearly 300 letters of congratulation, and, when my Balliol Fellowship was announced in the papers, only one.

I was asked at various times by various members of the Government to act as Chairman of certain Royal Commissions or Committees. One, and one only, of these invitations I refused because I did not wish to undertake it; in each of the other cases there was, as it happened, some obstacle which to my regret prevented me from accepting. One of them, indeed, which would have brought me into contact with the Admiralty, I was particularly sorry to decline. But I agreed, as already stated, to serve on a Royal Commission appointed in 1913 to enquire into the currency system of India. Austen Chamberlain was chairman; the enquiry was an interesting one, and, owing to his good management, not inordinately long. Our Report seemed to me to be an important and valuable one: it remains to be seen whether, after the war, any notice will be taken of it.

It has been a special pleasure to me to serve as a Director of the P. & O. Steamship Company under

REMINISCENCES

the chairmanship of my friend Inchcape, with whom I worked for so many years at the India Office when he was a Member of Council.

Since I left Oxford in 1870 I have read almost nothing of the Greek and Latin prose writers with the exception of Plato and Thucydides, and of Thucydides very little. But the best classical poets in both languages have been and still are my constant friends and companions; no words can describe what their value has been to me; and there was only one short period when they were, for the time, partially displaced in favour of another "mighty master" of a later date.

I had at Minley an edition of Dante's *Divina Commedia*, by a man whom I knew, Arthur Butler, son of "Butler of Wantage," and Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge. The Italian text is accompanied by a literal prose translation, and one day, I think in 1903, when looking at the backs of my books, it struck me that one ought to be ashamed of never having read the *Purgatorio* and the *Paradiso*; the *Inferno* I knew imperfectly from Cary's translation. For, to my shame be it spoken, I had never taken the trouble to learn to read Italian fluently, although my knowledge of Latin and French was sufficient to have made it an easy task at any time. Accordingly, I took down Butler's *Purgatorio*, intending merely to read his translation carefully through. But I soon found myself looking constantly at the Italian; I began more and more to get an idea of its forms and its meaning; and by the time I had read a dozen cantos I was fascinated. It was exactly the thing that I was in want of. For some time I worked steadily with dictionary,

LORD KILBRACKEN

translations, and notes, and in a few months I had learned my lesson thoroughly and could read the Italian with fluency; just as a schoolboy, with a very slender knowledge of Greek, can, by industry and by the use of similar helps, make himself thoroughly familiar with the language of a difficult Greek play. From that time till now the reading and re-reading of the *Commedia*, and of a small collection of works bearing upon it, has been to me not only a constant delight, but something more than that.

O voi ch'avete gl' intelletti sani,
Mirate la dottrina che s'asconde
Sotto il velame degli versi strani! ¹

I am often tempted to regret that this great discovery of mine, for such it was, did not take place long before, so that I might have talked of Dante to Mr. Gladstone, who was a devoted student of the *Commedia*, and to my mother-in-law, whose copy of the book, annotated in her handwriting on almost every page, I now possess. And yet I believe it was better for me that I should come to know the *Commedia* just at the time when I did come to know it. If I had read it much earlier in life, its meaning, or most of it, would have been to me unintelligible; and, if my first impressions of it had been inadequate or materialistic, I should never have completely got rid of them. As it is, I will only say that I am not surprised by the opinion of the late H. A. J. Munro, Professor of Latin at Cambridge, one of the greatest scholars of the nineteenth century, whose bias must have been entirely in favour of the ancient classics. Of him it is recorded that "Homer

¹ Dante, *Inferno* 9, 61.

REMINISCENCES

and Lucretius were hardly more familiar to him than Shakespeare, Goethe, and Dante; the last he considered the greatest poet of any age or nation."

We took possession of our present house in Sussex about Whitsuntide, 1913, and here, if it had not been for the war, which came upon us when we had occupied our new home for a little more than a year, it seemed as if we might have lived, as Voltaire says, "*tout doucement*."¹ As it is, all is darkness and uncertainty; and, indeed, at the time of writing (June, 1916) I am, and have been throughout, more uneasy about the social and economical condition of the country, as it will be when the war is over, than I am about the issue of the war itself.

I have now written down all that I intended to write, and I end, as I began, by saying that these are *bona fide* reminiscences, unverified except in a very few cases by any reference to documents, and probably contain a certain number of inaccuracies, but none, I hope, of any importance. It is hardly necessary to add that what I have written is not an autobiography, for the simple reason that it is not a continuous or complete narrative of my life, some of the most important events of which are not mentioned in it, nor even alluded to. Those who know me best will best understand how much is left out, and how it is that, although I have spoken here and there of debts of gratitude, I have said little or nothing of many to whom I owe a debt which is, in the most literal sense of the word, unspeakable.

¹ "On peut très bien n'être pas l'ami de ces messieurs, et vivre tout doucement." Voltaire to d' Alembert, May, 1757.

*Noi andavam per lo vespero, attenti
Oltre, quanto potean gli occhi allungarsi
Contra ai raggi serotini e lucenti.*

INDEX

- ABERDEEN, Lord, 140, 215
 Adam, Sir F. Forbes, 190
 Adam, W. P., 113
 Adderley, Rt. Hon. C. B. (1st Lord Norton), 12, 29, 35, 46, 213, 214
 Adderley, C. L. (2nd Lord Norton), 46, 64
 Afghanistan, the Penjdeh incident, 136
 Alderson, Sir Edward Hall, 239, 240
 Arnold, Dr., 29, 140
 Arnold, Matthew, 180, 204-5
 Ascot, 222, 223
 Asquith, H. H., 61, 92, 203, 234, 248
 Asquith, Mrs. (Lady Oxford), 53*n.*, 248
 Asquith, Violet (Lady Bonham-Carter), 248
 Australia, 8-9
 Ayrton, Rt. Hon. A. S., 93

 Badby, 67
 Balfour, Arthur, 173, 201
 Balliol, 42, 44, 49-63; Honorary Fellowship of, 249
 Barber, William, 23
 Baring, T. C., 105
 Baring crisis, 166
 Barratt, Alfred, 50-51, 67
 Beaconsfield, Lord, 90, 97, 98, 112, 113, 114, 115, 120, 124, 131, 132, 134
 Bedford, 39
 Belgian neutrality, 136
 Benson, Archbishop, 39
 Bernard, Sir Charles, 168
 Bessborough, Lord, 3
 Betteshanger, 46, 58, 64, 72, 76, 77, 101, 108, 152, 204, 206
 "Big-side Levée," 38, 39

 Birthday Dinner, India Office, 159
 Blachford, Lord, 73-5
 Blunt, Lady Anne, 90
 Bradford, Sir Edward, 168
 Bradlaugh, Charles, 133-4
 Bradley, Very Rev. G. G., 213
 British Museum, Trusteeship of, 248
 Brodrick, St. John (Lord Midleton), 180, 181, 182-3, 237, 239, 241
 Bryce, Lord, 106, 127, 225
 Burghclere, Lord, 158 *n.*, 247
 Burke, T. H., 200
 Butler, Arthur, 39, 250
 Butler, Captain (Deputy Black Rod) 238, 239
 Butler, Dr. Montagu, 106, 205
 Butler, Samuel (Bishop of Lichfield), 37
 Byron memorial, 90

 Cabinet meetings, 92, 149
 Cairns, Lord, 99
 Cambridge, 44
 Campbell, Colin, 160, 168
 Camperdown, Lord, 245
 Canterbury Settlement, New Zealand, 4, 5-8, 229-31
 Carnock, Lord, 45
 Carrington, Lord, 238, 239
 Cavendish, Lady Frederick, 27*n.*, 84, 143 *n.*
 Cavendish, Lord Frederick, 82, 84, 85
 Cefnamwlch, 31-2, 64, 77, 209, 210
 Chamberlain, Sir Austen, 249
 Chamberlain, Joseph, 119, 120, 197
 Charteris, Frank, 49
 Cheap Trains Act, 151

INDEX

- Chesters, 46, 47
 Childers, H. C. E., 149, 151
 Chitral expedition, 175-7
 Choate, Joseph H., 232-3
 Church, Dean, 74
 Churchill, Lord Randolph, 64-5,
 171-3, 186
 Churchill, Winston, 172
 Clark, R. L., 43-4
 Clarke, R. F., 23
 Clayton, John, 47-8
 Clifton College, 39
 Clough, A. H., 13, 69, 70
 Clovelly, 68
 Cocks, Mrs. Somers, 32
 Cocks, T. Somers, 12, 32
 Coleridge, Lord, 72
 Conington, John, 58-60
 Coombe, 166
 Cope, Herbert, 68
 Corry, Montagu (Lord Rowton),
 120
 Cotton, Bishop, 39
 Council of India, 160, 161-6, 169-
 70, 173
 Courtney, Lord, 189, 247
 Craig Lledr, 32
 Cranworth, Lord, 85
 Crewe, Lord, 248
 Cromer, Lord, 243
 Cross, Lord, 111, 173, 174, 186,
 202
 Cross, Hon. W. H., 173-4
 Currie, Bertram, 159, 165-6, 189,
 208
 Currie, Sir Donald, 147, 148
 Currie, Laurence, 166
 Curzon, Lady, 188
 Curzon, Lord, 179-82, 183, 188,
 198, 245
 Daly, Denis, 16
 Daly, James (Lord Dunsandle), 16
 Daly, Robert, Bishop of Cashel, 16
 Dante, 250-52
 Davey, Lord, 50
 Davidson, Archbishop, 248
 Davidson, Mrs., 248
 De Bunsen, Sir Maurice, 45
 De Grey, Lord (Lord Ripon), 12
 Denmark, King of, 203
 Devon, Lord, 12
 Dilke, Sir Charles, 119-20
 Disraeli, Benjamin (Lord Beacons-
 field), 90, 97, 98, 112, 114, 120,
 124, 131, 132, 134
Divina Commedia, La, 250-52
 Donoughmore, Lord and Dowager
 Lady, 67
 Downing Street, 91-3
 Drake, Francis, 168, 196
 Dresden, 67-8
 Duff Gordon, Sir Alexander, 80, 81
 Duff Gordon, Lady, 80
 Dulwich College, 212-13
 Dunsandle, Lord, 16
 Edward VII, King, 69, 115-17, 234
 Elgin, Lord, 61
 Ellis, J. E., 183
 Elmhurst, E. P., 35
 Ennismore Gardens, 208, 223
 Eton, 106
 Evans, Charles, 36
 Evans, Miss, 210-12
 Evistones, 154
 Fairmile, 204
 Famine, Indian, railways and,
 164-5
 Farrer, Lord, 189
 Farwell, Lord Justice, 40, 46
 Ferard, J. E., 168
 Fettes College, 39
 Finch, *see under* Wynne Finch
 Fitzgerald, James Edward, 12,
 229-30
 Ford, E. S., 99
 Ford, Rev. Lionel, 210
 Fowler, Sir Henry (Lord Wolver-
 hampton), 174-8
 Fox How, 140
 Franco-Prussian War, 67, 68-9
 George V, King, 39
 Gladstone, Helen, 220
 Gladstone, Henry, 228
 Gladstone, Herbert (Lord Glad-
 stone), 121, 226, 228
 Gladstone, Sir John, 128, 140
 Gladstone, Mrs., 77, 78, 91, 108,
 110, 111, 121, 125, 142, 143,
 145-7, 148, 215, 216, 218, 219,
 228-9

INDEX

Gladstone, W. E., 4, 12, 81, 85, 86, 92, 104 *n.*, 121, 152, 155, 156, 159, 161, 165, 171, 191, 215, 244, 251; his admiration for author's father, 5, 77; author as Private Secretary to, 17-18, 79, 81-98, 104 *n.*, 107, 118-50, 153-4, 168; and Irish Land Act, 18; author's visits to Hawarden, 77-80, 108, 139-45, 217-21; at times rather alarming, 79, 91; regarded political questions as ethical, 79-80; and Home Rule Bill, 80; a strong anti-socialist, 83-4; and Lord Frederick Cavendish, 84; a supremely good official, 85, 137, 157; his passion for economy, 87, 93, 135, 217; his treatment of correspondence, 87-90; his holidays at Hawarden, 87, 132, 133, 139; dines at author's house, 91, 121-2; his sense of humour, 93, 144; and R. E. Welby, 94-5; not a good party leader, 96-7, 128, 130, 133, 137, 146; his habit of "self-imputation," 96-7, 130; not a judge of character, 96, 130, 131; and the conflict between the right and the expedient, 96-7, 131, 133; and Irish Education Bill, 97; as Chancellor of Exchequer, 97-8, 147, 151; his defeat in 1874, 98; resigns party leadership, 100; and Lord Granville, 101; dissuades author from entering Parliament, 107 *n.*; on his seventieth birthday, 108; and the Eastern Question, 108-9, 132-3, 135; his oratory, 109-12, 127, 137; his speech at Newman Hall, 109-12; temporary public hostility to, 112; the Midlothian campaign, 113; again Prime Minister, 113, 117, 147; Queen Victoria and, 114; Edward VII and, 115-16; as a smoker, 116; author his principal Private Secretary, 118-50, 153-4; formation of his Government, 118-20; in Down-

ing St., 120, 121; Lord Selborne and, 122; his noble and pure character, 123, 127, 137; his immense driving power, 123-4, 127; his personal dislike for Disraeli, 124, 131, 132, 134; his self-control, 125, 126-7; and the Gordon episode, 125-6; not interested in certain Departments of State, 126, 135; Lord Bryce on, 127; his opinion of politics, 128, 129; his religious life, 128, 144-5; his wish to withdraw into private life, 128-9, 232, 233; and his supporters in the House, 130; and the Bradlaugh incident, 133-4; his political courage, 134-5; and the Penjdeh incident, 136; his possible attitude to the Great War, 136-7; his dislike for Palmerston, 135, 140; his admiration for Scott, Arnold, Melbourne, 140-41; his love for Oxford, 141-2; his favourite stories and quotations, 142-3; his rare colloquialisms, 143-4; Mrs. Gladstone and, 145-6; his *Castle* line voyages, 147-8; thinks of resigning, 149, 150; wishes to put author into permanent Civil Service, 149, 150; his hatred for war, 150; on Lord Kimberley, 157-8; and Bertram Currie, 165; recommends author for K.C.B., 202, 203; author's later relations with, 215-21; and death duties, 216; on his own vitality, 218; his adventure with a cow, 219; his death, 221; the choice of his biographer, 224-8
 Gloucester Place, 11, 12, 31, 33, 74
 Glynne, Sir Stephen, 78, 207
 Glynnese language, the, 143-4, 145
 Godley, Sir Alexander, 18
 Godley, Alfred Denis, 17
 Godley, Charlotte (author's mother), 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 12, 13, 20, 22, 30-31, 32, 33, 44, 73, 74, 75, 210, 212, 229-31, 232

INDEX

- Godley, Charlotte (Lady Pollen), 18
 Godley, Denis, 14, 17-18, 83, 201, 222
 Godley, Harriet (Mrs. O'Brien), 14, 18
 Godley, Hon. Helen (Mrs. Rice), 178, 239
 Godley, Hon. Hugh, 210, 211, 212, 220, 237, 239
 Godley, Rev. James, 14, 17
 Godley, John (author's grandfather), 2, 14-16, 31
 Godley, John Robert (author's father), 2-13, 15, 20, 21, 22, 28, 29-30, 63, 71, 76, 108, 229-30, 231; in New Zealand and Australia, 4-9, 229-30, 231; Assistant Under-Secretary of State at War Office, 4, 12; his death, 4, 29-30; memorial tablet to, 12, 13; Gladstone's admiration for, 5, 77; Jowett on, 4-5, 52; his friendship with Thackeray and Tennyson, 13
 Godley, Kate, 222-3, 239
 Godley, Katherine (author's grandmother), 14, 15, 16
 Godley, Lieut.-Col. William, 14, 17, 18
 Goodlake, T. S., 42, 43
 Gordon, General, 125, 126
 Gorst, Sir John, 186-7, 188
 Goschen, Lord, 213
 Goschen, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward, 45
 Graham, Rutherford, 66, 68
 Graham, William, 66, 67
Grantully Castle, 147-8
 Granville, Lady, 104, 152, 154
 Granville, Lord, 100-101, 102-5, 113, 117-18, 132-3, 151, 152, 153, 154
 Gray, Sir Albert, 45, 68
 Green, Thomas Hill, 57
 Grenfell, Henry, 118
 Grimston, R., 3
 Grosvenor, Lord Richard, 131
 Gurdon, William Brampton, 82, 85-6, 130
 Haileybury College, 39
 Halliday, Sir Frederick, 161
 Halsbury, Lord, 213, 243, 245, 246
 Hamilton, Edward, 120, 121, 125, 226
 Hamilton, G. A., 12
 Hamilton, Lord George, 155, 178-9, 180, 183, 195, 197, 198
 Hamilton, Sir Robert, 201
 Hamilton, W. K. (Bishop of Salisbury), 121, 140
 Hams, 46, 64
 Harcourt, Sir William Vernon, 176-7, 178, 216
 Hardinge, Sir Charles (Lord Hardinge), 200
 Hardinge, Daisy (Mrs. Kirkpatrick), 202
 Harris, Lord, 173
 Harrow, 15, 21, 28-9, 105n., 106
 Hartington, Lord, 84, 100, 113, 152, 153, 154, 155, 160, 165
 Hawarden, 77-80, 87, 89, 108, 121, 122, 128, 132, 139, 144, 217, 218, 219-21, 227
 Hawes, Sir Benjamin, 4, 12
 Hely Hutchinson, Walter, 67
 Herbert, Lord, of Lea, 4
 Herschell, Lord, 189, 247
 Hertford College, Oxford, 105-6; Honorary Fellowship of, 248-9
 Hicks, Edward Lee, Bishop of Lincoln, 106
 Hildyard, Charlotte, 65
 Hildyard, Sarah (Mrs. Wynne), 19
 Hirtzel, Arthur, 168
 Hoare, Rev. Walter, 33
 Holland (groom), 7
 Holmes, Oliver Wendell, quoted, 185
 Home Rule Bill, 80
 Hughes, Tom, 99
 Inchcape, Lord, 190-91, 250
 Inchiquin, Lord, 14
 India Office, 155, 157, 159-98; colleagues in, 167-9, 185, 194-6; its constitution and machinery, 160-61, 191-3; the Council of India, 160, 161-6, 169-70, 173, 250; Secretaries of State, 171-85; Under-Secretaries of State, 185-9

INDEX

- Ingham, Sir James, 45
 Ingham, R. W., 44-5
 Irish Education Bill, 97
- Jackson, Rev. W. W., 23, 58
 James, Hon. Sarah. *See* Kilbracken, Lady.
 James, Lady (1st Lady Northbourne), 46, 48, 72, 77, 212, 251
 James, Sir Walter (1st Lord Northbourne), 12, 48, 72, 76, 77, 80, 81, 83, 107, 121, 212
 James, Sir Walter (2nd Lord Northbourne), 25, 46, 64, 247
 Jessel, Sir George, 99
 Jex-Blake, Very Rev. T. W., 29, 35, 44
 Jowett, Rev. Benjamin, 4-5, 42-3, 51-6, 61, 66, 68, 72, 83, 106
- Keble, John, 74
 Kennedy, Rev. Benjamin Hall, 37
 Kilbracken, title of, 235
 Kilbracken, Lady, 76, 77, 78, 80, 90, 91, 92, 147, 154, 239
 Killegar, 13, 14, 15, 31, 234
 Kimberley, Lord, 154, 155, 157-9, 160, 171, 173, 174, 179, 187, 188, 189, 197, 203
 Kirkpatrick, Mrs., 202
 Kitchener, Lord, 181, 182
- Lang, Andrew, 59-60, 61-2, 122
 Lang, Archbishop, 243
 Lansdowne, Lord, 53, 61, 200, 242
 Lee-Warner, Sir William, 45, 168
 Leigh, Lord, 213
 Leveson-Gower, Hon. Frederick, 103
 Leveson-Gower, George, 120, 142
 Liddell, Adolphus, 49, 68, 236, 237, 242
 Liddell, Edward, 68
 Lincoln's Inn, 76, 99
 Lingen, Lord, 93-4, 213
 Lock, Rev. Walter, 106
 Long, Rt. Hon. Walter, 201
 Loreburn, Lord, 42, 61, 237, 238, 239, 241, 245, 246, 247
 Lyall, Sir Alfred, 169-70, 184
 Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred, 198-9
- Lyttelton, Hon and Rev. Edward, 210
 Lyttelton, Lord, 12, 84, 143 *n.*
 Lyttelton, Port, 5, 6, 7
 Lyttelton, Hon. Spencer, 85
- Macdonnell, Lord, 201
 MacGeachy, F. A., 13
 Mackay, Sir James (Lord Inchcape), 190-91, 250
 Maine, Sir Henry, 161-3, 169
 Mallet, Rt. Hon. Sir Louis, 152, 154, 155, 157, 159
 Manipur affair, the, 186
 Maoris, 6-7
 Marlborough College, 39
 Marlow, 32, 33, 46, 64
 Marylebone election, 1880, 109-12
 Meade, Hon. Robert, 151, 152
 Melbourne, Lord, 140, 141
 Mellon, Harriet, 10
 Meole Brace, 224
 Merriman, J. X., 27
 Metternich, Prince, 203
 Mickleham, 204
 Midleton, Lord, 180, 181, 182-3, 237, 239, 241
 Midlothian campaign, 113
 Mills, Arthur, 13
 Milner, Lord, 106, 198, 244
 Minley, 208, 223, 233, 237
 Monck, Lord, 12, 17
 Monsell, W. (Lord Emly), 12
 Montgomery, Alfred, 150
 Montgomery, Sir Robert, 161
 Morley, Viscount, 183-4, 195, 225, 226, 227-8, 233
 Muir-Mackenzie, Lord, 71
 Munro, H. A. J., 252-3
- Nettleship, R. L., 42, 57
 New South Wales, 8-9
 New Zealand, 4, 5-9, 11, 229-31
 New Zealand football team, 39
 Newcastle, Duke of, 12
 Newman, Cardinal, 74, 75 *n.*
 Newman Hall, meeting in, 109-12
 Newton, Lord, 243, 244
 Nicolson, Sir Arthur (Lord Carnock), 45
 Nightingale, Florence, 170-71

INDEX

- Norman, Rev. R. W., 23
 Northbourne, Lady. *See* James, Lady.
 Northbourne, Lord. *See* James, Sir Walter.
 Northbrook, Lord, 155
 Northcote, Sir Stafford, 84
 Norton, Lord. *See under* Adderley.

 O'Brien, Harriet, 14, 18
 O'Brien, Rev. Henry, 14
 Ormathwaite, Lord, 69
 Ottaway, C. J., 63
 Oxford, 42, 44, 49-64, 69-70;
 Gladstone's love for, 141-2
 Oxford, Lady, 53 *n.*, 248
 Oxford Union, 60

 Palmer, Rev. Professor Edwin, 56
 Palmer, Roundell (Lord Selborne),
 3, 12, 56, 122, 212, 246
 Palmerston, Lord, 135, 140
 Papillon, Rev. T. L., 58
 Parliament Bill, 1911, division in
 House of Lords, 242-8
 Patterdale, 68
 Pauncefoot, Bernard, 40
 Pearson, Rev. Hugh, 71-3
 Peel, Sir Robert, 134, 140
 Penjdeh incident, the, 136
 Percival, Bishop, 39
 Percy, Lord, 188-9
 Philpotts, J. S., 39
 Phoenix Park murders, 85
 "Plains, The," 6
 Pollen, Charlotte (Lady Pollen),
 18
 Pollen, Sir Hungerford, 12, 18, 65
 Pollen, Jessie, 65
 Ponsonby, Sir Henry, 115, 202
 Port Lyttelton, 5, 6, 7
 Portman Street, 74, 101, 108, 121
 Potts, A. W., 37, 39
 Powles, Mary, 7, 10-11
 Prendergast, W. P., 13
 Primrose, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry, 50

 Queensferry, 77

 Radley College, 21-5, 27-8
 Railways, Indian, 164-5
 Rawlinson, Sir Henry, 161

 Reading parties, 67-9
 Redesdale, 46
 Reid, R. T. (Lord Loreburn), 42,
 61, 237, 238, 239, 241, 245, 246,
 247
 Rendel, Lord, 247
 Riccarton, New Zealand, 6
 Rice, Henry and Hon. Mrs., 83,
 178, 239
 Ripon, Lord, 12
 Ritchie, Sir Richmond, 168, 194-
 6
 Roberts, Lord, 181
 Robinson, Alfred, 196
 Rodbourne, 64, 65
 Rogers, Sir Frederic (Lord Blach-
 ford), 73-5
 Rogers, Rev. William, 213
 Roman Wall, 47, 48
 Rose, Mr., and his son, 35-6
 Rosebery, Lord, 64, 225, 226, 244,
 245, 246
 Rosebery Toppin, 65
 Rowton, Lord, 120
 Rugby football, 38-40
 Rugby School, 25, 29, 34-42, 44,
 106, 117; Edward VII's visit to,
 117; its Governing Body, 36,
 213-15
 Russell, G. W. E., 187-8
 Russell, Lord John, 134
 Russia and the Penjdeh incident,
 136

 St. Albans, Duchess of, 10
 St. George's Hill, 204
 Salisbury, Lord, 112, 144, 186
 Sanderson, Sir Thomas, 199
 Scott, Robert, 51, 56
 Scott, Sir Walter, 140
 Selborne, Lord, 3, 12, 56, 122, 212,
 246
 Selfe, H. S., 13, 29
 Sewell, Rev. William, 21-2
 Seymour, Horace, 120
 Shuckburgh, S. E., 168
 Simeon, Sir John, 12
 Sloane Gardens, 223
 Smith, James, 143
 Sonning, 71, 72
 Spencer, Lord, 178, 214
 Stanhope, Edward, 186

INDEX

- Stanley, Dean, 71, 72, 73
 Stewart, Field-Marshal Sir Donald, 194
 Stokesley, 64, 65-6
 Stormont, William, 9-10
 Strachey, General Sir Richard, 163, 165, 189
 Stuart-Wortley, Archibald, 68
 Sydney, New South Wales, 8-9
- Talbot, Edward, Bishop of Winchester, 247
 Temple, Archbishop, 29, 35, 36-7, 80, 213-14
 Tennyson, Lord, 13
 Thackeray, W. M., 13
 Thames, the, voyages down, 69-70
 Theobald, H. S., 45, 68
 Thorley, G. E., Warden of Wadham, 62
 Thornton, Sir E., 12
 Thorold, George, 45
 Tillard, Rev. Robert, 45, 206, 224
 Tittleshall, 224
 Trollope, Anthony, 4
 Tummel Bridge, 68
 Turkey, danger of war with, 132-3
 Twisleton, Hon. Edward, 13
- Urrard, 66-7
- Vaughan, Dr., 21, 28, 45
 Verney, Frederick, 170
 Verney, Sir Harry, 170
 Victoria, Queen, 71, 113, 114, 115, 202-3
 Voelas, 13, 20, 31, 33, 34, 64, 209, 210
 Voltaire, 252
- Waddington, Dr., 142
 Wakely, L. D., 169
- Walmer Castle, 101, 104, 152
 Walpole, Sir Horace, 167
 Waterfield, Sir Henry, 167
 Watson, W. L., 109
 Welby, Lord, 94-5, 178, 189, 237, 239, 241, 242
 Wellington College, 39
 Wemyss, Lord, 49
 West, Rt. Hon. Sir Algernon, 81, 82, 147, 151, 202
 White, Field-Marshal Sir George, 181
 Willoughby de Broke, Lord, 243
 Wolverhampton, Lord, 174-8
 Wood (keeper), 34
 Wordsworth, John, Bishop of Salisbury, 106
 Wordsworth, William, quoted by Gladstone, 143
 Wynne, Charles G. *See* Wynne Finch, Charles G.
 Wynne, Charles W. G. (author's grandfather), 2, 3, 9, 18-19, 31, 33, 63, 65
 Wynne, Charlotte. *See* Godley, Charlotte (author's mother).
 Wynne, Frances, 32, 231-2
 Wynne, Major Heneage, 19
 Wynne, Rev. John, 19-20, 63
 Wynne, Louisa, 32
 Wynne, Sarah (author's grandmother), 19
 Wynne, William, 20
 Wynne Finch, Charles (author's cousin), 34, 209-10
 Wynne Finch, Charles G. (author's uncle), 3, 12, 19, 34, 35, 77, 83, 209
 Wynne Finch, Heneage, 9, 34, 65
 Wynne Finch, Major John, 234
 Wynne Finch, Major Seymour, 19, 25-6, 34
- Yardley, William, 40, 41

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY
RICHARD CLAY & SONS, LIMITED,
BUNGAY, SUFFOLK.

AIDE-de-CAMP'S LIBRARY

Accn. No......

1. Books may be retained for a period not exceeding fifteen days.